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I say it.

(The following proceedings were held at 10:03 a.m.:) THE COURT: Let's do the Takata/Ford. I call it Takata, but it's really the Ford Fairness Hearing. So if some of the lawyers want to move up. The interpreters are excused. Thank you very much. think all these folks speak English, so I appreciate it. We have chairs in front if anybody who is going to be at the Fairness Hearing, any lawyer who's going to speak at the Fairness Hearing, not on the Motion to Dismiss, but at the Fairness Hearing, then grab a chair there. If you're not going to speak, then it doesn't matter, because I assume if you're not -- if you haven't gone past the bar, you don't want to speak. See, that way I know. I'm not inviting speakers. allowing whatever the law requires, but if you're back there, it means you've elected to be an observer or wait until the Motion to Dismiss. Okay. We're here on the proposed Ford settlement. do we have on behalf of the plaintiffs? MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, Peter Prieto, Matt Weinshall, and Aaron Podhurst on behalf of the plaintiffs. MR. BOIES: Good morning, Your Honor. David Boies on behalf of the plaintiffs.

MR. BOIES: I'm working on it. I'm working on it.

THE COURT: I heard you took senior status, is the way

1 THE COURT: Something I wish I would do considering 2 I've done three trials this month already. 3 MR. MINER: Good morning, Your Honor. Curtis Miner on 4 behalf of the plaintiffs. 5 MS. WESTFALL: Your Honor, Jan Westfall on behalf of 6 the objector. I'm not sure which table I should be sitting at. 7 THE COURT: I don't know. 8 MS. WESTFALL: Third table. 9 THE COURT: Okay. All right. You don't like either 10 side. 11 Okay. What is your name? 12 MS. WESTFALL: Jan Westfall, Your Honor, on behalf of 13 objector Barbara Owens. 14 THE COURT: Okay. Welcome. 15 All right. Who else do we have? 16 MR. MILES: Your Honor, on behalf of Ford Motor 17 Company, Perry Miles. 18 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Good morning, Your Honor. 19 Hoipkemier on behalf of objector Angie Elder-Johnson. 20 MR. PENTZ: Good morning, Your Honor. John Pentz on 21 behalf of objector Doug Perkowski. 22 MR. ROTHSTEIN: And Paul Rothstein on behalf of 23 objector Dolly Wright. THE COURT: All right. Why don't we hear from the 24 25 objectors first? You're closest to that microphone.

Tell us again who you represent and why you object.

MS. WESTFALL: Thank you, Your honor.

Jan Westfall and I present Barbara Owens and I'm going to just focus on -- our fundamental concern with the settlement has to do with the degree to which the settlement piggybacks on the work of NHTSA and the mandates under the Coordinated Remedy Order. I'm picking up on a concern that was raised, that you, yourself, raised in the hearing on approval of the second set of settlements, which is, how do we tell the public that the plaintiffs have achieved value added for the public and how do we distinguish what the Government has done from what is achieved in this lawsuit?

Our concern here is we have a \$300 million settlement where only a little over 20 percent, if we calculate it correctly, is monetary benefit that will be going to the class, and a lot of the other benefits are non-monetary. In particular, the Outreach Program is a hundred million dollars, it's one-third of the settlement.

THE COURT: That's one of the objections before that was made, right, with the other settlement?

MS. WESTFALL: Correct.

THE COURT: What do I do since I've approved it before? Now what do I do?

MS. WESTFALL: So, Your Honor, I realize that that puts you in a bit of a conundrum.

THE COURT: What do I do?

MS. WESTFALL: I think that these objections were raised previously and in the prior hearing --

THE COURT: Did they go up on appeal?

MS. WESTFALL: I was not involved in the first two. I believe there was some settlement of some of the issues and I think that -- well, I can really only speak to this settlement, Your Honor.

THE COURT: I know, but what do I do? You know, I kind of always want to find a remedy to issues. I sometimes fail miserably which is why so many of my cases are making my court reporter wealthy because everybody is going to trial, but she is going to end up in the hospital. But if people don't want to reach an agreement, people go to trial. In a class action case if you don't like a settlement, what's the solution in a class action? Opt out.

MS. WESTFALL: Here, Your Honor, I'm not concerned so much with the settlement itself, but more that the Court value the benefits that are achieved for the class.

THE COURT: So you want me to reduce the value of it.

MS. WESTFALL: So in particular --

THE COURT: How does that help your client?

MS. WESTFALL: Well, so we have \$300 million of nominal value for the settlement. If you were to say the hundred million dollars in the Outreach Program is duplicative of what

was mandated by NHTSA and that Ford was already engaging in the development process of conducting this sophisticated Outreach Program that is contemplated here, so I'm going to exclude that from the valuation of settlement, then you have a \$200 million settlement. If you take attorneys' fees out of a \$200 million settlement, even if you give them their 25 percent, you're still getting a lot more money for the class. You're getting that extra 25 million that will go to the class that would have gone to attorneys' fees to fund the --

THE COURT: So your objection comes down to saying the attorneys' fees are too high, give the class members more money. I mean, I hate -- you know, I'm not as eloquent as you are, but is that the bottom line would you say?

MS. WESTFALL: Well, it is true that if you exclude these non-monetary benefits, the class will get more money.

THE COURT: How much more money, each member?

MS. WESTFALL: Well, if you take out the Outreach Program, or at least significantly discount it, because we know that Ford was doing a lot of the hundred million dollar plan already, if you take out part of the Rental Program because Ford had already committed to at least a component of the Rental Program --

THE COURT: But why were they doing that? Good marketing, you know, you want to still sell cars, a little push. It was almost like a coalition here. The issue here is, who

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deserves the credit? You know, who deserves the credit for the first Iraq war, right? The United States probably, but there were what -- I mean, I forget, since I saw all of the funeral, what, 40 countries or whatever it is. Everybody put in something because it was a team effort. So what do I do? I start --MS. WESTFALL: You can discount it. You know, you could say I think that --THE COURT: Who does that help, if I discount it? MS. WESTFALL: Again, it helps the class because the amount that you exclude from the total pool to be considered for an award of attorneys' fee results in more money for the class. THE COURT: How much money? MS. WESTFALL: Okay. So let's say --THE COURT: More or less. MS. WESTFALL: -- you exclude the Outreach Program and most of the Rental Car Program, then your settlement is only worth \$150 million. Instead of \$75 million in attorneys' fees, you are paying 37 and a half million in attorneys' fees. THE COURT: And they would get cash. MS. WESTFALL: That 37 and a half goes to the class. So their cash goes up from roughly 60 million to, you know, a hundred million. THE COURT: Well, let's say that that's reasonable. I

am not suggesting it is or it isn't, at least not yet. What's

my power? I'm not a party. I'm just a judge. I know you all think a judge can do anything he wants. It's really not true. What do I do?

All I can do is say yea or nay. I can't modify. I mean I could modify a Consent Decree after a lot of evidence, and it seems like that's in vogue now with the homeless, the water case. Everybody wants to do that, the Everglades.

But this one, I can't get in there and say, hey, what do you think about this? I can say, yea or nay. If I say nay, who gets hurt, who gets helped?

MS. WESTFALL: Well, so without saying nay, you can actually value the settlement differently and award attorneys' fees based on what you consider the real value that plaintiffs have achieved for the class.

THE COURT: Which is kind of what I did the last time.

I approved it and reduced, the plaintiffs' lawyers would say substantially, some people may say not enough. Everybody always disagrees about that. So that's really what you want me to do.

MS. WESTFALL: You know, I think that there are other problems and I know that some of the other objectors are going to speak to some of the class conflict issues, but at a baseline, Your Honor, I believe if you did reduce, you know, or only give credit for half of the benefits that the plaintiffs have achieved -- the problem here is that we know that some of these benefits were already in the works, that Ford was doing

1 it. And to award --2 THE COURT: Totally unrelated to the lawsuit. 3 MS. WESTFALL: Sorry? 4 THE COURT: Totally unrelated to the lawsuit because 5 the Government is always the first one and the most efficient. 6 Our executive branch is always at the top of everything. 7 MS. WESTFALL: Maybe not the most efficient, but I 8 think if you look at the Outreach Program in particular --9 THE COURT: The judiciary is, by the way. 10 MS. WESTFALL: -- and compare the Settlement Agreement 11 to the Coordinated Remedy Order and other NHTSA publications, 12 and in our objection we actually went through several of the 13 NHTSA --THE COURT: You did. I read that. 14 15 MS. WESTFALL: -- publications and documents, you'll see that the language of the settlement tracks what NHTSA is 16 17 requiring. They couch them as recommendations, but they require 18 the companies to submit written engagement plans. They require 19 the company -- their focus was on completion of the recall 20 remedy. They did not assign a specific dollar amount that had 21 to be spent on this outreach, that's true, but they did the 22 require the companies to do it. To say that it was just, you 23 know, sort of a suggestion is minimizing what the Government was 24 doing.

THE COURT: All right. And this is on behalf of

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Barbara Owens? 1 2 MS. WESTFALL: Yes, Your Honor. 3 THE COURT: All right. You wrote everything in at 4 Docket Entry 3108. 5 MS. WESTFALL: Thank you, Your Honor. 6 THE COURT: Okay. What other objector wants to speak? 7 Grab a microphone that's closest to you. 8 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Good morning, Your Honor. Adam 9 Hoipkemier. 10 THE COURT: You can raise that. You're taller than the 11 criminal defendant. No, there's a button that nobody sees. 12 There is a sign on it. I checked it out, but I might as well put that wreath on there. That way they have an excuse. 13 14 I'm sorry. Go ahead, again. 15 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Your Honor, we represent Angie Elder-Johnson. Ms. Elder-Johnson is the Clerk of Oconee Court 16 17 in Georgia, which is outside Athens. I expect you're going to 18 hear a lot about professional objectors when the plaintiffs make 19 their presentation. 20 Okay. Could you tell me your name again? THE COURT: 21 MR. HOIPKEMIER: It's Adam Hoipkemier, Your Honor. 22 THE COURT: You told me that. And you represent who? 23 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Angie Elder-Johnson. 24 Okay. I got it. You said she is who? THE COURT: 25 MR. HOIPKEMIER: She is the Clerk for the Oconee County

1 Court in Georgia. She's the Clerk of Court for a State Court in 2 Georgia. 3 THE COURT: And she is speaking for that court or just 4 individually? 5 No, I only made that point to --MR. HOIPKEMIER: 6 THE COURT: I thought I had missed something. 7 MR. HOIPKEMIER: -- say that she's not a professional objector. We aren't either. Whenever they come up here and say 8 9 mean things about the objectors, that doesn't apply to us. 10 THE COURT: Okay. 11 MR. HOIPKEMIER: We do agree --12 THE COURT: You complain about insufficient information 13 for me to evaluate it and you don't like the \$74 million fee. You think 35 million is reasonable. Is that a summary of it? 14 15 MR. HOIPKEMIER: So it's similar to the things that Ms. Westfall said. 16 17 THE COURT: I know. That's why I said it that way. 18 MR. HOIPKEMIER: So I won't repeat what she said. We 19 do agree with one thing that Ford made a point in their papers 20 about, which is that to the extent professional objectors didn't comply with Your Honor's instructions in the Preliminary 21 22 Approval Order, you should deny those objections. There are 23 some ghost written objections that are copied and pasted. We 24 agree with the parties that that's an issue and you should

overrule objections that they are boilerplate --

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1 THE COURT: Yours are not ghost written, you wrote 2 them. 3 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Correct. 4 THE COURT: Okay. So we won't deal with that in your 5 case. 6 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Okay. So we're going to focus on two 7 aspects of the settlement. Does Your Honor have a copy of the 8 Settlement Agreement? 9 THE COURT: Oh, I read the whole thing, unfortunately. 10 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Okay. All right. 11 THE COURT: That's what I do when I want to go to bed. 12 It's better than any pills you want to take or warm milk or 13 anything, but I want you to summarize it because you put it in 14 in Docket Entry 3091. 15 MR. HOIPKEMIER: We did. 16 THE COURT: Yeah. I can still read. What do you think 17 I should do? Reject the settlement. 18 MR. HOIPKEMIER: As to Section III.A.2.h and Section 19 III --20 THE COURT: Can I do that? Can I reject the portion 21 and approve the others? I can do that? 22 MR. HOIPKEMIER: No, you cannot do that as to the 23 settlement, but you can do that as to fees. So it's not yea or 24 nay on fees. Under Rule 23, your Honor can completely disregard 25 the --

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the settlement from --

THE COURT: So I should approve the settlement and reduce the fees from 74 million to 35 million. That's what you said. MR. HOIPKEMIER: No. You should not approve Section III of the settlement because it gives the parties discretion to change the categories of payments without Your Honor's supervision. THE COURT: So you want me to decide which lawyer gets what within the plaintiffs. MR. HOIPKEMIER: No, that's not it. The point is that --THE COURT: What do you want me to do? MR. HOIPKEMIER: -- there are three categories, essentially, of credits or payments under the settlement. Your Honor grants -- if Your Honor were to grant preliminary approval, Section III gives the lawyers the option to change the distributions that they have put in the Settlement Agreement, and so that is a violation of Your Honor's obligation to look at the settlement. They could come in and change 50 million from one category to another without any Court oversight and that circumvents Rule 23. 22 THE COURT: And the reason they could do that is to decide who gets what. MR. HOIPKEMIER: They can move money under the terms of

1 THE COURT: From who to whom? 2 -- cash payments to the class to the MR. HOIPKEMIER: 3 Outreach Program. 4 THE COURT: Okay. You don't like the Outreach Program 5 either. 6 MR. HOIPKEMIER: We do not like the Outreach Program. 7 THE COURT: So eliminate the Outreach Program and give 8 more cash to whom? To nobody. 9 MR. HOIPKEMIER: I'm only talking about this specific 10 term that allows the lawyers discretion to change the pot of 11 money as they see fit if Your Honor were to approve the 12 settlement. All we are suggesting is that you include a term in 13 the Final Approval Order that requires any sort of suggested change to the allocation of funds to come to Your Honor first. 14 15 THE COURT: I can do that. 16 MR. HOIPKEMIER: All right. THE COURT: No, it's a question. Can I do that? 17 18 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Yes. 19 I can do that and say, I approve it, but I THE COURT: 20 don't approve this section. 21 MR. HOIPKEMIER: I think you could include a sentence 22 in the Final Approval Order that said, any change to the terms 23 of the distribution under the terms of the settlement requires 24 notice to the Court or approval of the Court. Your Honor has 25 broad discretion.

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                        So when they give notice, then what am I
             THE COURT:
    going to do? What do I do? I hear evidence?
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            MR. HOIPKEMIER: It's just a Rule 23 issue where Your
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    Honor at least can look at it. I don't think you would have to
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    enter any sort of order, but at least it's going past the Court.
             THE COURT: No, but if it goes past the Court -- there
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    are a lot of things I like to read and it's very interesting,
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    but when it comes to a case, it's only interesting for me
    personally if I can do something about it. If I cannot do
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    something, it's like reading about another case, right? So what
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    happens if -- what notice? They're going to tell me, hey, we're
12
    moving this from A to B. What do I do?
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             MR. HOIPKEMIER: That's within the Court's discretion.
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             THE COURT: I read it and I go, oh, okay. Do I bring
15
    them in and say why or don't? And then what happens?
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            MR. HOIPKEMIER: That's up to Your Honor.
17
             THE COURT: Do you come in and say, I told you so,
           Then what do I do?
18
    Judae.
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            Mr. HOIPKEMIER: It's up to Your Honor under Rule 23 I
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   would say.
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             THE COURT: After I approve it, I can continue to
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    supervise it. It's like a Consent Decree.
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            MR. HOIPKEMIER: You can maintain continuing
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    jurisdiction over the enforcement of the settlement.
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            THE COURT: For how long?
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1 MR. HOIPKEMIER: As long as you want. 2 THE COURT: Oh, my goodness gracious. I may not live 3 that long though. See, that's the problem. All right. 4 else? 5 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Turning to the issue of the fee 6 application, our objection is to the inclusion of the 7 non-monetary relief in the common fund. It's similar. 8 THE COURT: That's kind of like the same thing. 9 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Right. So I'm not going to talk about the Outreach Program again. I'm going to talk about the Loaner 10 11 Vehicle Program and the extended warranty on the airbag 12 inflator. 13 THE COURT: That's not a good thing? I think it's useless. 14 MR. HOIPKEMIER: 15 THE COURT: An extended warranty is useless. 16 MR. HOIPKEMIER: On the inflator piece of the airbag. 17 THE COURT: Because? 18 MR. HOIPKEMIER: For one thing, no one would ever know 19 prior to an accident that an airbag inflator was faulty as far 20 as I can tell and would have no way to make a claim to get their 21 airbag repaired. How would you ever know? 22 THE COURT: Well, don't they get notices now, the class 23 members? 24 No, this is a warranty on the MR. HOIPKEMIER: 25

replacement inflator. So a class member goes in, gets their

airbag inflator replaced. Now they have a warranty on that for the next X number of years, so if it fails again, then Ford will repair or replace it.

THE COURT: Why isn't that a good thing? You said useless.

MR. HOIPKEMIER: What I'm saying, I think it's illusory and useless because -- has Your Honor ever looked at the airbag inflator in your vehicle? I couldn't find an airbag inflator and I don't know if it is faulty or not.

THE COURT: All right. What else?

MR. HOIPKEMIER: So the way the Supreme Court has defined the common fund, we think that the common fund is limited to the \$140 million that's allocated to reimbursement of expenses and residual payments to the class, and we agree that a 25 percent fee, the benchmark, would be appropriate for the 140 million common fund. We disagree that class counsel can include the nine figures in purported value of non-monetary relief, which is the airbag inflator and the loaner vehicles. Your Honor denied our --

THE COURT: Because that's useless, too. The loaner vehicle is useless, too?

MR. HOIPKEMIER: Your Honor has no way to reliably value what these loaner vehicles are worth to the class. To be part of the common fund, it needs to be a lump sum that's mathematically ascertainable to determine --

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So it's better to say, settle, don't THE COURT: include that. That's a better settlement. MR. HOIPKEMIER: That's not what I'm saying. I'm only talking about the fee application --THE COURT: Well, that's what I'm saying though. MR. HOIPKEMIER: You can approve the settlement and still look at what is actually consisting of the common fund for the purposes of determining a percentage fee. So approve the loaner vehicle portion of THE COURT: the settlement, even approve what you say is a worthless extended warranty, but just give them less money. MR. HOIPKEMIER: We aren't challenging --THE COURT: I would probably not write it like that, but you've written it kind of like that. That's what it is. the class member is better off, worse off, or the same? MR. HOIPKEMIER: We aren't --THE COURT: Ford is better off because they spent less money, or what happens? MR. HOIPKEMIER: We haven't objected to the fairness of the loaner vehicles or the airbag warranty. We're only saying that --THE COURT: It's the value. MR. HOIPKEMIER: We're saying, if this is the deal you want to make, then this is your common fund, it's 140 million, it's not 300 million.

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So what happens if I agree with you? The THE COURT: lawyers get less, the class members get the same thing, you think some things are useless, and Ford gets more money. Tell me no. MR. HOIPKEMIER: The lawyers get less because you're calculating --Okay. THE COURT: MR. HOIPKEMIER: So the class gets that cash, that goes back into the residual payments. So the class directly benefits. THE COURT: How much? I've asked your other counsel how much. MR. HOIPKEMIER: About 40 million. Based upon what we expect the return rate THE COURT: would be of people who actually seek it, what do you think, how much? MR. HOIPKEMIER: Are you asking me to estimate the claims payments in this case? THE COURT: Yeah. MR. HOIPKEMIER: It will be minuscule. THE COURT: Okay. So I just wanted to make sure. you want me to do all of that for a minuscule benefit. want to balance out the minuscule benefit to the class, the worthless warranty, and the loaner car, which is good, but don't give any value to it. I am doing a balancing test, but way down

1 here, right? Seems like it. 2 MR. HOIPKEMIER: The plaintiffs' lawyers were the ones 3 who structured this case with the claims process. They could 4 have distributed cash to every class member that got the recall, 5 and then it would not have been a minuscule claims rate. 6 THE COURT: And then you wouldn't object. 7 If this was a \$299 million cash MR. HOIPKEMIER: 8 settlement with checks to every class member who made a claim, 9 we would not object. 10 THE COURT: All right. I got it. Thank you. 11 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Just a final point: Your Honor denied 12 our motion related to the opinions of Kirk Kleckner. That makes 13 a difference to the common fund because his opinion --14 THE COURT: You want him to testify. 15 MR. HOIPKEMIER: We would like to call him to testify. THE COURT: Oh, I don't do that. You've made your 16 17 point. 18 MR. HOIPKEMIER: Okav. 19 THE COURT: Okay? All right. Thank you. 20 Kleckner is with a K. 21 Next. 22 MR. PENTZ: Good morning, Your Honor. I'm John Pentz 23 on behalf of objector Doug Perkowski. 24 THE COURT: Hold on, hold on. Okay. I got it. 25 got to look at my notes. This is a lot. Docket Entry 1088.

don't know if you knew that but okay. Because that's in case 14-24009. Some cases have more docket entries than others.

MR. PENTZ: You are correct. That is the docket number.

THE COURT: You don't like the attorneys' fees, they're grossly excessive, they should be determined like all the other settlements, you don't like the Outreach Program. That's similar to what others have said, right?

MR. PENTZ: Right.

THE COURT: Then you say there are class conflicts, intra-class conflicts. What do you want to say about that? And you don't like the Rental Car Program.

MR. PENTZ: What is different -- well, the rental car is fine here because, ironically, Ford was not providing rental cars apparently before the settlement, unlike Honda and many of the other companies. They were one of the holdouts and, therefore, it does appear the rental car benefit may actually be a true benefit here.

But the Outreach Program continues to be, in my opinion and my client's opinion, a colossal waste of money, but also what's unusual, this is the only settlement I can think of where the lead plaintiffs negotiated an enormous benefit that's one-third of the settlement for people who are unlike themselves, they're not similarly situated to the lead plaintiffs who by definition know about the problem, know about

1 the urgency of getting their airbag replaced and presumably have 2 already done so. 3 THE COURT: What do you mean, presumably have already done so? 4 5 MR. PENTZ: Well, I know there's a shortage of 6 replacement parts, so maybe some of the lead plaintiffs may not 7 have been able to replace their airbag inflator yet, but they 8 certainly don't need additional outreach to tell them to do so. 9 THE COURT: But other people might, right? 10 Yes, other people might, but none of those MR. PENTZ: 11 other people are like the lead plaintiffs and that's somewhat 12 ironic and unusual here. 13 THE COURT: What do you mean, they're not like the plaintiffs? 14 15 MR. PENTZ: Well, they're not similarly situated. The benefit of --16 17 THE COURT: In what sense are they not similarly situated? 18 19 MR. PENTZ: Because the benefit of the Outreach Program 20 can't benefit the lead plaintiffs. 21 THE COURT: Because they know. They are lead 22 plaintiffs. 23 Because they know, right. MR. PENTZ: 24 Well, lead plaintiffs will always know more THE COURT: 25 than the others. That's the reason we want to give notice,

right? 1 Right. And I think that if the notice in 2 MR. PENTZ: 3 this case had been a little better and different, it could have 4 made the entire class aware of the need to go in and replace 5 their inflators right away. 6 THE COURT: How could notice have been better? 7 MR. PENTZ: Well, as the parties argued, that the 8 notice doesn't really duplicate the Outreach Program because the notice was about exercising your right to object and opt-out and, you know, make a claim at the end of the four years. 10 But 11 it could have been different, right? It could have been 12 formatted differently, it could have --13 THE COURT: Like what? Well, more like what the Outreach Program 14 MR. PENTZ: 15 is doing and what --16 So it's a good Outreach Program? THE COURT: 17 MR. PENTZ: Well, it is good to tell people to take 18 their car in and get them replaced. 19 THE COURT: But it's not good because? 20 MR. PENTZ: Well, because --21 THE COURT: It's valued too high. 22 MR. PENTZ: -- as Ms. Westfall said, NHTSA already 23 requires it. 24 The third Coordinated Remedy Order, the plaintiffs 25 argue, well, we pick up -- the Outreach Program picks up where

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that leaves off. But as I read it, it doesn't leave off It encourages the companies to be very creative and anywhere. it --THE COURT: What do you mean, very creative? MR. PENTZ: Well, the methods of contact, banner ads, email, you know, graphics, all of those things that are recommended in the Coordinated Remedy Order. THE COURT: What's wrong with that? Oh, nothing, but that means that the MR. PENTZ: companies were already under an obligation to do those things. The Outreach Program does those things. That clearly is going to save the companies money that they would have otherwise spent. THE COURT: So it's duplicative basically. MR. PENTZ: Right. That's the argument there. smaller Outreach Program, a smaller portion of the settlement may have been okay, may have been permissible. We're talking about one-third of the total amount here --THE COURT: Yeah, you said that. MR. PENTZ: -- and we have some experience, too. the parties say, this is supposed to be a scientific process where we look at what's happened up to now and we make adjustments. I would argue even though you approved those other

settlements, we now have enough information and we should make

1 some adjustments and we should use that money to incentivize 2 people to bring their cars in. If the part is available, they 3 get the replacement; if it's not, they get a rental car and they 4 don't have to drive around in their dangerous vehicle that has a 5 defective airbag. 6 THE COURT: And this settlement doesn't provide for 7 that? 8 MR. PENTZ: Well --9 THE COURT: It does. 10 Well, yeah, it does. MR. PENTZ: 11 THE COURT: If I'm in left field, bring me home. 12 MR. PENTZ: It doesn't provide the financial incentive 13 to bring your car in. That has not been --14 THE COURT: Financial incentive. Bring in your car and we give you \$100 cash, that would do it. 15 16 I would think that would motivate a large MR. PENTZ: 17 portion of people who right now are dragging their feet. 18 THE COURT: Oh, there would probably be people who 19 don't have a damaged airbag that would come in probably. 20 The dealer can verify that. MR. PENTZ: 21 THE COURT: Of course. 22 MR. PENTZ: There's no chance of outsiders coming in 23 and stealing that. 24 THE COURT: Of course. 25 Moving on to the fees, I would urge Your MR. PENTZ:

Honor to follow the framework that Your Honor laid out at the Honda hearing, which is that the percentage award should get lower in each successive settlement and the multiplier. Class counsel have disclosed that their total lodestar or they claim that their total lodestar to date is 139 million, and we know that as of last February at the Honda hearing, they said it was 121, which means they've generated \$18 million in lodestar in one year.

Now, maybe that's true, but certainly a portion of that is related to the implementation of the other six settlements, and therefore, their lodestar related to Ford settlement could be as low as 10 million, which means they're asking for a multiplier here of over 7. And in my client's opinion, the fee here should be no more than 10 percent, and the multiplier in the last of the cases which had the least risk because the risk was eliminated --

THE COURT: Is this the last of the cases?

MR. PENTZ: Well, I don't know. Maybe there was one more.

THE COURT: I want you to hang around and help me decide the Motions to Dismiss. Okay.

MR. PENTZ: Okay. There may be one more.

THE COURT: It's the seventh I quess.

MR. PENTZ: Yes, the seventh case. Well, as soon as class counsel was fully compensated for their lodestar with the

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   multiplier of 2.5, you know, the risk went away and, therefore,
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    this is the least risky. They should get the lowest multiplier
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    and the lowest percentage.
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             THE COURT: All right. "All right" means I understand.
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    0kay?
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             MR. PENTZ:
                         Okay.
                                Thank you.
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             THE COURT:
                        All right. Thank you.
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             Who else?
             MR. ROTHSTEIN: Good morning, Your Honor. Paul
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    Rothstein on behalf of Dolly Wright.
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             Your Honor, I have --
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             THE COURT: Hold on a second.
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             MR. ROTHSTEIN:
                             Sure.
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             THE COURT: Let me find you here. Okay.
                                                       I've got you.
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             MR. ROTHSTEIN: Your Honor, I have two witnesses in the
    courtroom that I'd like to --
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             THE COURT: Oh, you wanted to call Brian Fitzpatrick,
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    Kirk Kleckner and Patrick Juneau, who is here.
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             MR. ROTHSTEIN:
                             Right. Patrick Juneau is here, Your
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    Honor.
             THE COURT: I'm going to let Patrick Juneau talk.
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   You're right.
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             MR. ROTHSTEIN: Well, Your Honor, I have two other
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   witnesses that I filed a Supplemental Witness List. They're
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   marketing and advertising individuals.
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1 I'm not going to hear them. THE COURT: 2 They're in the courtroom, Your Honor. MR. ROTHSTEIN: 3 THE COURT: A lot of people are. The courtroom is 4 always open for anything you want. Unfortunately, or 5 fortunately, there's always activity in this courtroom. 6 But you wanted Patrick Juneau to speak. I'm going to 7 let him speak. He's going to make a presentation. 8 MR. ROTHSTEIN: Your Honor, I would like to proffer the testimony of the two individuals that are in the courtroom. 9 10 THE COURT: Did you do it in writing? 11 MR. ROTHSTEIN: Yes, I filed a notice --12 THE COURT: No, did you proffer what they were going to say or did they sign an affidavit indicating what they were 13 14 going to say? 15 MR. ROTHSTEIN: No, they did not. 16 The reason they didn't is because they THE COURT: 17 didn't have the time, they didn't want to put it under oath, or 18 you thought oral is better than writing, or what's the reason? 19 MR. ROTHSTEIN: The reason is, Your Honor, I came up 20 with the idea to improve the Outreach Program at a later date. 21 What date was that? THE COURT: 22 MR. ROTHSTEIN: That was last week, Your Honor, Friday. 23 THE COURT: You dictated something? 24 MR. ROTHSTEIN: It was Friday, Your Honor. 25 certainly summarize their testimony.

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THE COURT: You should have summarized it in writing before. They should have signed an affidavit and you would have a proffer. MR. ROTHSTEIN: Your Honor, I also proved proffered their testimony to class counsel and Ford. conversation for 45 minutes yesterday. I wasn't there so --THE COURT: MR. ROTHSTEIN: I am just letting the Court know that I made --I was taking a verdict yesterday, another THE COURT: one. Sorry, I missed it. MR. ROTHSTEIN: I made the opportunity available to They spoke about what can be done in terms of an Outreach Program. THE COURT: Did you convince them? The conversation went on for 45 MR. ROTHSTEIN: minutes, so I think it had an impact in terms of whether or not the Outreach Program currently in existence is effective and how these two individuals would be able to make it an effective program and increase the rate of vehicles being brought into dealerships at a significantly different --THE COURT: And who's in charge of the Outreach Program? Well, the Outreach Program is --MR. ROTHSTEIN: THE COURT: I'm sorry. Who is in charge of the

1 Outreach Program to bring in these individuals who would be 2 helpful? 3 MR. ROTHSTEIN: Well, I mean, it's part of the 4 Settlement Agreement, Your Honor. 5 THE COURT: Who? You said you talked with them for 45 6 minutes. 7 MR. ROTHSTEIN: Class counsel. 8 THE COURT: And you convinced them. 9 Well, I wouldn't -- I don't know if I MR. ROTHSTEIN: 10 convinced them. They're sitting here, some of them that were on 11 that conversation. They entertained a series of questions. I 12 think these two individuals have a lot to contribute to make 13 this Outreach Program effective and based on --14 THE COURT: So what do you want me to do? MR. ROTHSTEIN: I would like the Court to be able to 15 16 listen to these two individuals. One individual is very --17 THE COURT: I won't because they didn't submit anything 18 in writing before. 19 MR. ROTHSTEIN: Well, I would ask the Court --20 THE COURT: Otherwise I'm going to have, what, a parade of witnesses and then cross-examination? Is that what I'm 21 22 supposed to do? 23 MR. ROTHSTEIN: Your Honor, only from the standpoint 24 that this Outreach Program is such a significant component, I 25 would ask the Court to relax that rule to be able to hear their

1 testimony for a few minutes in regard to the benefits of 2 having -- and let me just say this, Your Honor --3 THE COURT: Your request to relax those rules is 4 denied. 5 MR. ROTHSTEIN: Okay. 6 THE COURT: But you went with the plaintiffs' counsel, 7 you should be credited for doing that. That's a good thing it 8 seems to me. You'll get your reward, if not in this world, in the next world for doing that. I mean --10 MR. ROTHSTEIN: I am looking for in this world. 11 THE COURT: Go listen to all these eulogies in these 12 funerals. Isn't it good? People do good things, sometimes not 13 expecting a reward. Good for you. What do you want me to do? 14 I'm not going to hear them. 15 MR. ROTHSTEIN: Okay. 16 I will hear from Patrick Juneau since you THE COURT: 17 want to hear from him. Do you want to hear from him now? MR. ROTHSTEIN: I do want to hear from Patrick Juneau 18 19 and I would like to be able to question him, or is only the 20 Court going to question him? 21 THE COURT: I don't know. It depends on what he says. 22 I don't know what he's going to say. 23 MR. ROTHSTEIN: Oh, okay. So am I allowed to question 24 him before he gives his presentation? 25 THE COURT: You want to question him before he gives

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    his presentation.
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                             Based on the report that he submitted.
             MR. ROTHSTEIN:
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                         Oh, because he did something in writing.
             THE COURT:
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             MR. ROTHSTEIN:
                             He did it in writing, Your Honor.
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             THE COURT:
                         Look at that. Isn't that great? And then
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   you want to question him afterwards, too?
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             MR. ROTHSTEIN: Well, it depends on how his responses
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    are to the questions that I have.
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             THE COURT: Let's say whatever he says is consistent
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   with what he wrote.
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                             Then I probably -- I would just want
             MR. ROTHSTEIN:
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    basically to know what his plans are to improve the Outreach
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    Program because based on the report --
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             THE COURT: Okay. Let's hear from him. Have a seat.
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             Do you want to say something?
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             MR. JUNEAU: Yes, sir.
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             THE COURT: Is this a good time?
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             MR. JUNEAU: Yes.
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             MR. ROTHSTEIN: Your Honor, before --
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             THE COURT:
                         Thank you. Have a seat. We'll hear from
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    him.
         You want to hear from him --
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             MR. ROTHSTEIN: Yes.
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                        -- we'll let you. He's here. Is it better
             THE COURT:
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    at the witness stand or at the lectern? What do you prefer?
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             MR. JUNEAU: The lectern will be fine.
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THE COURT: You got it. State your name, who you are, what you do in this case. Good morning, Your Honor. MR. JUNEAU: THE COURT: Good morning. MR. JUNEAU: My name is Patrick Juneau, Your Honor. was appointed by this Court to be the special administrator who was charged with the responsibility of administering the settlement program that was entered into by the settling parties in this case. THE COURT: You were appointed at the request of the parties. MR. JUNEAU: That's correct, Your Honor, and I have been serving in that capacity roughly seven months. really kind of the activation part of this program. THE COURT: When do you think you'll get paroled? What I'd like to do, I just spent some MR. JUNEAU: time, Your Honor -- I thought it would be appropriate at this stage to report to the Court what we have done, how we have done it, and essentially what the results of those efforts have been thus far, with the permission of the Court. The goal of the Outreach Programs in each of these settlements, Your Honor, which have been entered is to maximize, to the extent practical, the completion of repairs of the

defective vehicles, and to do so, we have met and continue to

meet extensively with each of the OEMs who are involved as

settling parties, as well as the NHTSA, the independent Takata monitor, to hone this approach and to determine how best we can reach the goal within restraints of the Settlement Agreement.

As a result, we have developed and have been implementing in fact a comprehensive process to achieve that goal.

First, the Outreach Programs are generally, and this is important, aggregated under my oversight, in other words all of the respective settlements, as the independent court-appointed administrator. This consolidation, Your Honor, has provided us with a collective benefit in several ways to the settling OEMs as well as the drivers of the vehicles.

Third, because the Outreach Programs are generally consistent across the settling OEMs, we were able to continually improve the process by contrasting and comparing what is working and what isn't working through testing, analysis, and measurement. We did that with all of the operational OEMs in this case. This approach to learning about what drives responses, which is critical in this case, and the remedies is unique, and in my humble opinion from what I've observed, is on the cutting edge of the recall industry.

Fourthly, and this dovetails with the last point I just made, we are able to engage consumers in a coordinated and integrated manner through direct Outreach Programs like mail, email, outbound phone calls, mass media, and public relations to create a more acute understanding of the issue and its potential

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effect on the individual beyond just the general awareness of the existing recall.

To do all of this, Your Honor, we begin with the -- and this is critical -- state registration data from each of the affected vehicles for which repair has not been completed. The quality of that data, which generally consists of the name and address, is sometimes deficient for a variety of reasons, mostly because people sometimes don't update their vehicle registration with the state departments in which they live and when the vehicles move or change hands amongst owners.

The problem most often arises with older vehicles, and some of the vehicles in this recall are up to 19 years old, and simply finding those individuals who are driving these old cars is a real, real challenge. Since the age of these vehicles is directly related to level of the risk that these defective inflators present, we tried to append the basic state registration information with a variety of other sources to try to confirm who the true owner is, whether they are still on the We also updated the contact information from mailing addresses, telephone numbers, emails, and social media from different sources to try to increase our chances of actually getting in touch with the people we are trying to reach. have been numerous attempts in the past to reach a lot of these We've added information on each of the consumer's consumers. demographics and behavioral characteristics. By using this

information, we're able to group the outstanding consumer population into segments based on similarities, that is, whether based on age, marital status, children, no children. Wealth is another example.

Each of these segments, created segments for this program, reacts differently to different people, different messages, to whether it's an email or a post card, to whether images are emotional or more straightforward like a formal letter. Each of those segments which we have developed may have different barriers preventing them from having had a repair completed.

Let me give you some examples: A parent can't find time to bring the car for repair. Two, a young driver who simply does not appreciate the urgency of the recall. Three, an elderly driver who may have a problem with the dealer who would be completing the repair. Those, again, are just examples.

What we then have done is developed creative assets like mail pieces, post cards, letters, emails, different images and different languages depending on the segment we are dealing with, to personalize the message to the characteristics of the individual we are trying to reach and to overcome the particular barrier that they have.

We also looked at the priority groups that the vehicle is in. Since Priority Groups 1 through 3 have generally received dozens, literally dozens, and even hundreds of outreach

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attempts, whereas in the past Priority Groups 7 through 9 have not, the message is going to be different. We also considered language preference amongst these people as opposed to simply sending out post cards and letters just on a routine basis and maybe just change the color. To give you some perspective, across the settling OEMs we have developed over 500 creative assets to date with several hundred or more currently being drafted and circulated for review amongst the totality of the parties. Now, to be clear, not all of those 500 are being used at once, and in fact, some of them have been retired so-to-speak because they perform poorly relative to other assets that we have available to us. To do this, I think it's a very good example to these Outreach Programs -- and this is critical -- we have been testing what works and does not work and improving on those learners. THE COURT: Have been in touch -- do you know Kirk

Kleckner, Brian Fitzpatrick?

MR. JUNEAU: Excuse me, I didn't hear you, Your Honor.

Kirk Kleckner and Brian Fitzpatrick, have THE COURT: you spoken with them?

> MR. JUNEAU: No, sir.

THE COURT: Okay. If they had things to help you with, you would be willing to speak with them?

MR. JUNEAU: I've never spoken to them, do not know who

they are.

THE COURT: Okay. But they'll tell you -- this is the beautiful thing about coming here, is when you walk out -- we probably don't have as good food as New Orleans, but we're pretty good and you can meet with some people and see what ideas they have and you can do it. But what you've got to tell me is basically the same thing as has been done in writing, or you're adding more stuff to it?

In other words, I'm kind of like cutting you off a little bit as elegantly as I can because, even though I didn't know you until this case, I know how influential you are because your son got confirmed as a Federal judge, so I kind of want to see whether you have the same magic for our five vacancies and three nominees that we have here. Maybe you can have an Outreach Program with the United States Senate, though I don't think post cards would do it, but just the direct contact. Just kidding, but just in case, you can always put in a good word.

MR. JUNEAU: I get that, Your Honor.

THE COURT: And congratulations. I haven't met your son, but congratulate him.

MR. JUNEAU: Oh, thank you very much.

THE COURT: Maybe we will transfer some cases over there.

MR. JUNEAU: And this is critical, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Go ahead. This is the fourth thing that is

critical, though. Go ahead.

MR. JUNEAU: Each of those assets we talked about is assigned a specific 800 number, which when dialed by the recipient, routes to the call center. When we outreach to those consumers with these assets and they respond by calling that 800 number, they are being monitored and we know from which those calls came and what the asset is identified with. We're able through that process, it's a very detailed process, to monitor the success rate of each asset. We can measure success in terms of how many calls are received relative to how many pieces went out and in terms of cost per response.

All of this is an innovative approach and has proved to be very effective, and I'd like to spend just a little time on this point:

One particular activity that appears thus far to have been very successful, we are communicating with state Departments of Motor Vehicles. These are where the basic registration data came from, and we have done this in connection with the OEMs across the board and with the cooperation of the state departments, we have been able in four states thus far -- and I'll tell you how we did that -- to send out letters, official letters under the letterhead of the state departments calling to the consumers the particular importance of this recall.

So a lot of barriers that you'd normally see about

flooding of letters and communications is to a large extent eliminated by this communication. We have done this across the board. The results have been phenomenal.

I just received -- and anybody can get it on their website -- a publication by the Federal monitor who took knowledge or recognition of this fact. I met personally -- because we had to start somewhere, I started in Louisiana because there's where I'm from.

THE COURT: Really? I wouldn't have been able to tell.

MR. JUNEAU: In spite of the end results of the football season.

THE COURT: LSU is not that bad.

MR. JUNEAU: I met with the Governor there, Your Honor, and through the cooperation of the state, we sent out a letter with all involvement of all the OEMs to the consumers in Louisiana about these affected vehicles, and we sent these to the consumers, and here is what is reported: This is not my report, this comes from the monitor. He's talking about Louisiana in particular. Four states have already done this. I have communication with other states that are ongoing.

The impact of these letters on Takata recall are remarkable. Excuse me. Repair rates in Louisiana were approximately 175 percent higher than in other states where the DMV didn't send out such a letter. That's a pretty impressive statistic.

1 THE COURT: Do you want some water? 2 MR. JUNEAU: If we can. 3 I will at the end, is what I do. That's my THE COURT: 4 incentive. 5 We are making a huge push, Your Honor, to MR. JUNEAU: 6 get this done by states and I think it's a real, real --7 Which are the four states? THE COURT: 8 MR. JUNEAU: I've reached out to a lot more states than 9 that, but I had to start somewhere and we got it done in states. 10 Four states that have done that, and the results have been 11 similar to what I have indicated here. That's a huge source of 12 accomplishment for us to keep pushing that and we're dealing 13 with that. I have meetings currently set up for the rest of the 14 15 southern states; Texas, Mississippi, and Alabama, with the Governors I'm meeting personally with because, as the Court 16 17 knows -- thank you very much -- in this process, high humidity 18 increases the risk. So we're going to the --19 THE COURT: That's what I hear. 20 And we have high humidity, so we're MR. JUNEAU: 21 addressing that as we speak, but I'm particularly pumped up and 22 charged about that. It's been a combined effort. It wasn't 23 just my office doing this, Your Honor. I dealt with the OEMs. I dealt with the Federal Government. We have a coordinated 24

effort to get this accomplished and get these vehicles off the

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road.

Now, on top of those direct activities that we're dealing with with the OEMs, we're beginning to roll out what I call an indirect activity, such as mass marketing, public relations campaign both on earned media, on national and local, as well as paid television ads and so on. All of that is in play as we're going forward.

An example of one of the points I mentioned earlier, given the significant cost of these activities, this is another example where economies of scale, the accumulation of all these people together, allows us to do things which would be very difficult to do if it was singly about one OEM. We plan to coordinate these mass media campaigns in a targeted manner to the extent possible with direct mail pieces and emails to be sending out on a regular basis.

Let me give you an example. A local news segment on Takata recall might say something like: If you receive a post card in the mail that looks like this, just don't throw it away. It is important for you and to save your life. This is a comprehensive and integrative approach to tie together the media together with what we're dealing with in the publications.

Let me give you some specific statistics.

THE COURT: You're towards the end, though, right? Are you towards the end?

MR. JUNEAU: Yes.

THE COURT: Okay. I just want to make sure it's not a filibuster or anything.

MR. JUNEAU: To provide a broad statistical overview of what we've achieved to date under the Outreach Programs which we've activated with all of the innovations I've told you about over the past several months, we've made over 63 million outreach attempts targeted to owners of impacted vehicles.

Those include 19.5 million direct mail pieces, over 13.5 million emails, nearly 6 million outbound calls, and 24 million Facebook impressions.

The call centers, which is a huge operation, has received 643,000 inbound calls and has scheduled 365,000 appointments with dealerships. We have seen 1,188,000 repairs completed.

To be clear about this, Your Honor, the OEMs or the settlements that I'm dealing with have continued on their own to conduct some different outreach efforts outside of, in addition to what we're doing, in an effort to reach the consumer. So that the total remedies attributable is not just because of the efforts of what we're doing, it's attributable to this combined effort that has taken place.

I would like to say what I presented, Your Honor, is a general high-level overview of the process, but it's an elaborate detail process. We worked extensively. I have met with NHTSA, the monitor, the PSC and the OEMs, who are all

tackling, all of them, the Government, everybody is tackling it the same with utmost seriousness and commitment.

This process I've outlined for Your Honor may seem or is incredibly complex from a management perspective, from a data gathering and analysis perspective, from a vendor perspective --we have a lot of vendors involved in this -- from a developmental perspective, and from a coordination perspective, and this is what's key: Despite these challenges and considering the fact we are only seven months basically since initiation of this process, substantial progress has been made in my opinion.

It is very important that I reported percentages in the reports that I made to the Court on appointment rates by activity alone and, while impressive, should not serve as a single measurement of the significant process that's been made. If you're doing that, you're reading the reports wrong. And the overall success of the program shouldn't be judged on a percentage of one activity. It's a cumulative effect of all of these factors I've talked about.

Here is the bottom line: The cumulative effect of these responses, that's all these detail things that we are doing, tying them all together with all the testing going on, contributes to the ultimate goal, and that is to get these vehicles repaired.

In just the last seven months 24 percent of the

affected vehicles in our program, in our program, on the road have been repaired. That's 24 percent in seven months. That's the statistic, that's the measure of whether this thing is working.

I would be remiss if I didn't say we have calls every week, sometimes multiple parts of the week, with each of those OEMs. We're dealing with all of the vendors who are putting out all this massive material to continue to coordinate and adapt and change. This is a progress, a moving target.

In answer to some of the questions I just heard sitting here in the courtroom, we're always receptive if someone has ideas to increase and to help with the progress. We are certainly willing to entertain and do that. A lot of those steps and procedures were put in place before today, so a lot of that is already activated. The results speak for themselves. There is a lot more to be done and let me make a comment of this. I'm talking about the past seven months. There are 44 months left for us to go to get this thing done, so there's a lot of work left to be done, but it was done through a accumulative effort of all of these OEMs and in a committed fashion to get this done.

I didn't come here, Your Honor, to be candid with you, prepared to give you a statistical report. I would have brought a whole mass of people in here if that's what --

THE COURT: Oh, I thought that's what you did.

MR. JUNEAU: I'm being very candid with the Court, but I would like to make this comment:

If there is someone who has an expert or someone who has a knowledge in this field that we are talking about, which is a cutting edge field, we have been and will continue today -- they can submit to me whatever their thoughts, collective wisdom is, and if there are benefits and things we should consider, they're going to be incorporated in this program.

THE COURT: All righty. Thank you. I am sure they will reach out either out in the lobby, in the attorney conference room on the 14th floor, or later on.

Thank you very much, Mr. Juneau.

MR. JUNEAU: Thank you very much, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you. Any other objector who's here who wishes to be heard? You wanted to hear from Mr. Juneau, who wrote the report. You can later on talk to him.

Now, there were, of course, some objectors who announced that they were not going to be here and the record is clear as to who they are: Kearney Dee Hustler about the attorneys' fees, they should be delayed. Carolyn McGlown, she objected to only \$250. Craig Huhman, saying his 2008 Lincoln is not covered. Mark Mulholland, \$500 wasn't enough. Raymond Arth, the attorneys' fees. William Youndt, Benjamin Majchrzak, M-a-j-c-h-r-z-a-k, about the attorneys' fees should be reduced and the Rental Car Program.

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So a lot of these things, of course -- the Outreach Program, we have heard a lot about that; and their argument is it does not provide a substantial benefit to the class, the Customer Support Program doesn't provide a substantial benefit. That's what some of the objectors are saying. The Rental Car Program doesn't provide a substantial benefit. There were some writings about intra-class conflicts precluding certification because claims were not typical, and I couldn't conduct the predominance analysis under Rule 23, and that the attorneys' fees were not reasonable for the different reasons, both as a percentage of the common fund under Florida law, et cetera. So that's basically the objections. Do the defendants want to say anything? Does the plaintiff want to say anything in response? Briefly, Your Honor. MR. PRIETO: Okay. Lawyers always say "briefly." THE COURT: Ιf you say "briefly," I may hold you to it. MR. PRIETO: Just a couple of comments, Your Honor. Peter Prieto on behalf of the plaintiffs to start. Two introductory comments so that we put --THE COURT: Well, if you're saying introductory comments, it's not "briefly" already. MR. PRIETO: Two things that I think the Court should Number one is, the reason you have so many objectors

present in the courtroom today is not because this settlement

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has issues that the other ones didn't have. In fact, the same arguments that were made in the first six settlements were made today and the Court rejected them. It's because they thought there would be THE COURT: warm weather in Miami or not? MR. PRIETO: No. As of December 1st, Rule 23 was amended, and I think there is an impetus for objectors to come forward now and appear in person because the rule changed in one interesting way, which is, if after this Court enters a judgment and while the case is on appeal a settlement is reached and that objector withdraws the appeal, this Court has to approve a payment to that objector. So I think what's happening now is that objectors feel compelled to come in here because if they're going to request a fee eventually or a payment is going to be made to them, they want the Court to see them, and I think there's a basis that they're going to make the argument they're entitled to attorneys' fees. I don't want the Court to think that the fact that we have these objectors coming --I've always allowed objectors to come in --THE COURT: MR. PRIETO: Correct. THE COURT: -- even before December 1st.

MR. PRIETO: Correct, and that's not a problem and they can come in and we are not going to -- we don't really want to

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    attack the messenger, we're going to attack the message.
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             The second point that I want to make is that every
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    single objection that was made by these objectors --
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             THE COURT: Has been made before.
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                          And you specifically, before the last
             MR. PRIETO:
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    hearing, you sent out a supplement saying, look, the objectors
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    have made all these objections. I want you to brief this
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    carefully and give me the argument in response and we did.
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             THE COURT: You did in writing.
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             MR. PRIETO: We did in writing.
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             THE COURT:
                         And I read it.
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             MR. PRIETO: Correct.
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                         Is there anything you want to change --
             THE COURT:
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             MR. PRIETO:
                          No.
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             THE COURT:
                         -- withdraw --
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             MR. PRIETO:
                          No.
                        -- that was a mistake?
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             THE COURT:
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             MR. PRIETO:
                          Nothing. The only thing that I would like
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    to say to the Court is, this whole argument about --
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                         What is the best argument of your
             THE COURT:
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    opponents?
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             MR. PRIETO: They have none, they really don't.
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             THE COURT:
                         What is the worst argument of your
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    opponent?
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             MR. PRIETO: That's a good question. That the outreach
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has no value. 1 2 Okay. What is the second worst argument? THE COURT: 3 MR. PRIETO: You're pretty good, Your Honor. I think 4 the second worst argument is that these fees are unreasonable 5 and you --6 THE COURT: Oh, you put that as the second worst 7 argument. Okay. 8 MR. PRIETO: You know why? Because the Outreach Program, Your Honor, saves lives. I mean, it would have been 9 crazy for us to send out a check, as one of the objector's 10 11 counsel says --12 THE COURT: What do I do with the attorneys' fees? 13 Because I chopped them before, too, and I'm sure it was But the issue that each time it should be lower, 14 upsetting. 15 that seems to be probably their best argument, that the seventh time, the risk goes down, the work is less, the attorneys' fees 16 17 should be less. I'm simplifying it because they do have Motions 18 to Dismiss. I thought it would be a half an hour Fairness 19 Hearing. I was wrong again. So what about that argument? 20 MR. PRIETO: That argument, we addressed it before, 21 Your Honor. 22 THE COURT: You did. 23 MR. PRIETO: First of all, the fee here --24 THE COURT: You won in part. 25 MR. PRIETO: In part, and so the Court may remember, we

asked for 30 percent in the last two settlements. The Court reduced us by --

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. PRIETO: We asked for 30, you reduced us to 20 percent, which was about \$70 million in fees. That was the reduction the second time.

The argument that we should get less as these settlements progress -- this time we're not asking for 30. We believe that we're entitled to 30, but we heard you loud and clear the last time.

THE COURT: Yeah, you reduced it on your own. I got it.

MR. PRIETO: Because we heard you, we heard the argument you made the last time and we said we're not going to ask for 30, we are going to ask for 25 percent, because we believe that 25 percent as to Ford -- which Your Honor knows fought us long and hard, longer than any defendant in this MDL -- we believe that 25 percent is reasonable. And Ford said up to 25 is fine, beyond that, we're not going to agree.

The argument that we should get less for successive is not appropriate in this case because, even though there was some, some what you would call duplication in terms of the actual Settlement Agreements, some of the same issues came up, that was basically it. As we told you before, these cases were prosecuted separately, individually. The evidence against Ford

was different than the evidence against Honda and different than the evidence against Toyota.

So number one, these cases were litigated separately.

To the extent that there was duplication, Your Honor, it was de minimis and it's not worth a lower fee than 25 percent. That's number one.

Two, there are policy reasons why the Court should not decrease settlements as either the fee goes up or in successive settlements, and we told you what one of those policy reasons was.

I mean, look, lawyers, like the farmer in Kansas, are economic actors, that's just the reality. So if the argument from the Court is, I'm going to award less as you settle successively, or as the settlements get bigger, then there's an incentive for the lawyers to basically hold and settle everything at once, which some lawyers will do if that's going to be the Court's reasoning.

So we don't want that. We have not done that, and I'm reminded of what the Court said a couple of years ago, which is, divide and conquer. You said divide and conquer, don't wait until everybody settles, don't litigate against everybody, divide and conquer. We followed that, we settled with four automakers first and then we settled with two later. And, you know, the Court knows that --

THE COURT: Are you going to settle against a few more

or not? 1 MR. PRIETO: You know, we're plaintiffs' lawyers, so we 2 3 would like to settle --4 THE COURT: Because they're all here. 5 MR. PRIETO: They're all here. 6 THE COURT: Okay. 7 MR. PRIETO: And we're willing to settle on reasonable 8 terms, but the 25 percent, Your Honor, that we're asking for we believe is reasonable. It's 25 percent of the cash and it's 13.9 percent of the total value of the fund if Your Honor takes 10 11 into consideration the warranty, which the Eleventh Circuit has 12 on many occasions said non-monetary benefits can get valued. 13 They should get valued, and as a matter of law, they do get valued. 14 15 There are two cases we cited to the Court, both from 16 the Eleventh Circuit. One was Carter versus Forjas where the 17 Court specifically held that non-monetary benefits should be 18 valued, and I'll just give you a very brief quote from that 19 Court. 20 THE COURT: But you did already, didn't you? 21 MR. PRIETO: All right. Then if I did, I did. 22 THE COURT: Didn't you? 23 MR. PRIETO: There are two cases -- yes. There are two 24 cases that we put in our memo, it's Carter versus Forjas Taurus

from last year by the Eleventh Circuit and also Poertner versus

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The Gillette Company, which essentially said that a warranty was a significant non-tangible benefit that should be included in the Settlement Agreement. We also included in our memo various cases not only in this district but in other districts where the Court has awarded the same percentage in successive settlements.

So we're not asking for the Court to go beyond anything that's not reasonable. As the Court knows, 25 percent is the benchmark in this circuit, so we believe that what we're asking for is reasonable. We're not asking for 30 percent like we did last time, because we heard the Court loud and clear. We think the Court should approve the settlement, certify the classes, and award us the attorneys' fees that we've requested, as well as give the class representatives the award that we are requesting for them, which is \$5,000 each.

If the Court has any other questions --

THE COURT: You know, there was an objection to that, I think to the 5,000, but that seems to be kind of a standard thing, right?

MR. PRIETO: It is. 5,000 is standard. In fact, I was reading some cases over last several days and some Courts have awarded as much as 10,000.

THE COURT: Okay. You know, I guess some people who have not had their airbags replaced kind of get upset that someone is getting \$5,000. That's basically it, right?

MR. PRIETO: That's part of it, but there's no conflict

in that. I mean --

THE COURT: No, it's done. All right. Give me a couple of days.

Obviously some, if not all of the objections, have been in the past overruled, so I probably would lean towards being consistent, even though on occasion, as I mentioned before, Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "A foolish consistency is the hobgloblin of small minds," but I'm sure I've been called worse things than that in 32 years as a judge.

I know I reduced substantially the last request for attorneys' fees, but I appreciate that now it has been reduced by the lawyers to 25 percent, and you've actually convinced your opponents -- the objectors at least, not your opponents, the objectors that 25 percent is reasonable. The disagreement is 25 percent of what? So there's that disagreement, but I've ruled on that before. I'm glad both in writing and orally, not just me, but all of you now know more about the Outreach Program and Mr. Juneau's willingness to hear from anybody else to improve the outreach. It can be done not just for this and other settlements, but as we move on. So I appreciate that, and I'll try to rule before the end of the week if I can.

MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, we have orders if the Court wants them.

THE COURT: You can submit them, I can change them, put it in a format. Give it to somebody, so that the format needs

to be changed.

Thank you very much for being here. Sorry it took so long. And now we will hear on the Motion to Dismiss once there's a little switcheroo of some players. Thank you so much. Happy New Year, Merry Christmas.

If anybody wants to leave your card with the court reporter for whatever reason, feel free to do so. If you want to leave your card with the court reporter, she would love that, if you spoke or wish to be recognized.

(There was a brief discussion off the record.)

THE COURT: We're here on the hearing on Motions to

Dismiss the Amended Consolidated Complaints in the multidistrict

case. I know we've got a lot of people.

This is how I think -- I guess I do say this a lot, divide and conquer. That's what I want to do, and because I haven't been as efficient as I wanted to be because of my meeting this morning that delayed a couple of things, this is what I wanted to do in order to hear from those who want to be heard.

It was pretty general, but you wanted -- you saw the claims and arguments on the Motions to Dismiss. You all got in writing what I wanted to hear from and, of course, that's already a lot and we probably won't get through with it in the morning, but I blocked off the afternoon, too.

So what I wanted to do was hear first, if someone

wanted to be heard, on Puhalla, the Complaint against

Volkswagen, Audi, Mercedes-Benz, and Daimler, specifically

whether the injury claim is traceable to the defendants'

actions. I kind of wanted to hear from both the defendants and
the plaintiffs from Volkswagen, Audi, Mercedes-Benz on that

first, and then I thought it would be good to hear from General

Motors, from both sides of course, on why I should or should not

stay because of the action of the National Highway

Transportation and Safety Administration.

Then I wanted to hear, if you all kind of agree, but we've got to have some order, on the personal jurisdiction arguments, the ones that I guess they refer to as directly filed into the Southern District of Florida, so whoever is going to speak about that. I thought we would do that first. It doesn't include everything obviously. So what I thought would be helpful is, I'm going to pass out -- those are the things I want to hear from you all now, whoever is going to speak on that very briefly.

You've got everything in writing so there's no point regurgitating. This isn't the busy State Court judge -- though it's kind of like a busy Federal judge, it is getting like that -- where I don't know what the case is about, and you say this is a breach of contract case, Judge, plaintiff sues the defendant, A, B, and C. We don't have that because you all have written copiously about it. I have help, too, with law clerks,

so I'm not going to rule from the bench and grant Motions to Dismiss left and right.

Obviously, a lot of the issues have been decided before, and I should be consistent with the claims with what I've done before, for better or for worse, at this stage, but as long as you preserve your right to appeal eventually.

There are some Complaints bringing new claims that I have not addressed before, new state consumer protection statutes, and some Motions to Dismiss advance arguments that I have not heard before or directly ruled on, including, as I mentioned, the personal jurisdiction standing, the group pleading and splitting, and I may be at fault the way I kind of forced you all to do certain things. So that I want to hear from.

So other than what I've just said, if you want to be heard, we are going to pass out for -- I guess I'll call it the bride and groom side. Any lawyer who wishes to speak, I want you to put your name, who you represent, and in one or two sentences the issue that you want to discuss that I have not mentioned as three big groups. If you're covered on those three groups that I've already mentioned, then you can speak. If not, you've got to put it there.

Now, I can't give you a lot of time. It's kind of like -- I'll give you more than the Multidistrict Panel gives you here in this courtroom, and they're coming again. I may not

let them use my courtroom in case they want to send another case, but I won't give you as much as the Court of Appeals does because it would be arrogance on my part if I gave you as much time. So more than the Multidistrict Panel, but less than -- just to see what you want to say regarding the specific issue. So you have to pick the one that you really want to talk about that you think I may be missing the boat on.

So we'll pass out two notebooks. I'm going to give the court reporter a needed bathroom break, and I'll come back in five minutes. Even if you haven't written on it, you can pass two notebooks around. Put a number next to it, put your name, who you represent, and you've got to put underneath what the issue is. There's plenty of room. We're not going to get to it. Once I see that, those people in the notebook, we're not going to get to you in the morning. So unless someone is willing to yield on a particular issue, you're going to be here in the afternoon unless someone doesn't want to, then you're free to go. I'm not ruling from the bench. I rule on the pleadings, but I don't know how else to do it, unless someone has a better suggestion than what I've just suggested.

Mr. Prieto, you have a better suggestion than what I've suggested.

MR. PRIETO: I just have a --

THE COURT: I'm willing to take if you grab a microphone.

1 MR. PRIETO: So --2 THE COURT: You could just settle and I could deny the 3 motions as moot, and say it's the eighth settlement, don't 4 reduce the attorneys' fees. 5 MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, this notebook is only for those who wish to speak on topics other than the ones --6 7 THE COURT: Other than the three that I have mentioned if you followed. I don't know if you followed the three that I 8 mentioned. Other than those, we don't have to --10 MR. PRIETO: 11 THE COURT: You don't have to. 0kay? 12 MR. PRIETO: Okay. 13 Does that make sense? I don't know if I THE COURT: was clear. Lawyers always file Motions for Clarification 14 15 because they know if they file Motions for Reconsideration, I usually deny that, so now it's clarification. They're smart. 16 17 So if anybody wants to say anything from any of the sides -- no, 18 no, keep passing it around. 19 MR. PRIETO: There are two. 20 I know, but it's not one for the plaintiffs THE COURT: 21 and one for the defendant, it's for everybody. I suspect there 22 are more defendants than plaintiffs. That's it? No one wants 23 to speak? 24 MR. MILES: Your Honor, we're passing one around on the

defense side. We thought there was one for plaintiffs.

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THE COURT: No, no, no, two sides. I meant by bride and groom is where you're sitting. I don't know. Nobody follows that anymore. Everybody sits wherever they want to in churches and temples.

Let me give my court reporter -- now, you want to make her happy? The thing that would make her happier than a midmorning break at 11:30, which I haven't been able to give her for the last couple of weeks, I've been her working really hard, is a business card from a lawyer who wishes to be heard. That's the second favorite thing for Gilda. So you can make someone happy, give her -- even though Hanukkah is over, give her a ninth gift by a card. With Christmas around the corner, do that. It makes her happy. I'll be back in five minutes. You can keep passing it, but we will keep the hearing.

Is that all right with everybody? All right. Even if it isn't, that's what we're doing.

(There was a brief recess taken at 11:30 a.m. and the following proceedings were held at 11:53 a.m.)

THE COURT: All right. Who wants to talk about the Puhalla, or Puhalla Complaint against Volkswagen, Audi, Mercedes-Benz and Daimler? On behalf of the plaintiffs, who wants to talk about that?

MR. PRIETO: I'm sorry. What is the issue again, Your Honor?

THE COURT: You don't want to talk about it? Okay.

Which defendant wants to talk about that? Come forward. 1 2 MR. BIANCHI: Your Honor, Daimler is going to talk 3 about standing in conjunction with that, which I believe is the 4 first question you put on the table. 5 THE COURT: All right. You've got cards and everything? 6 7 THE COURT REPORTER: Some gave me cards, but if they 8 could state their names, I'd appreciate it. 9 THE COURT: Of course. Everybody state your name, no matter how famous you are, and who you represent. 10 11 MR. BIANCHI: Good morning. My name is Jaime Bianchi. I represent Daimler AG, Mercedes USA, LLC, and Your Honor, we're 12 13 addressing the issue that you first posed, the standing issue. First, I should say I am standing here for my 14 15 colleague, Raoul Cantero, who wished he could be here, but unfortunately had a conflict. The issue really --16 THE COURT: You can defer to him and we will hear from 17 18 him in the future if you want. 19 MR. BIANCHI: Trust me, I will be deferring to him in 20 the future. 21 But the question really that you posed at the top was, you're looking at a new series or a new set of OEMs before you 23 in a new Complaint, and the question is: What is different? 24 What would be different here that wasn't true at least when you

looked at some of these very same issues and you ruled on last

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time. And obviously, there are a few very important issues that my colleagues all sitting here and in the back really want you to know about.

The first, of course, is the plea bargain, and I know there are a lot of issues on the papers on that, and in conjunction with that, it's clear, at least based on that Plea Agreement, that Takata misled the OEMs. It's clear on that plea bargain agreement that these OEMs are the victims of that fraud, and that essentially it's quite clear, and people have gone to jail and companies have gone through bankruptcy and all kinds of other issues have happened, that Takata misled the OEMs with respect to the inflators.

THE COURT: Well, at least they convinced the Government of that and a judge accepted a plea as to that.

MR. BIANCHI: But even more than convincing the Government, right, if you look at the Plea Agreement, it contemplated that there was a restitution mechanism --

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. BIANCHI: -- and those were all subject to a Special Master and there was an adjudicatory process associated with that. So it wasn't just, you know, someone standing here and doing a plea, there was kind of a fact finding associated with that.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. BIANCHI: The other thing that's important here is,

at least in the case of Daimler AG, and certainly, as I understand it, also for Audi and Volkswagen -- and if I'm incorrect on the Audi and Volkswagen, I'm sure someone will stand here and correct me -- there have been no ruptures in any vehicles.

THE COURT: So we wait until that happens?

MR. BIANCHI: No, this is not a manifestation argument, it's a little different. Right? We're at the pleading stage, and we're not really trying to deal with manifestation. You've ruled on that. We're not really going there.

But our point is this: If you look through the briefs that were prepared by the plaintiffs here, the notion that ammonium nitrate was used and that other OEMs were having issues with it should be enough. Right? It should be self-evident. And there's incredibly graphic language that's been used in various transcripts that I've read about how ammonium nitrate is like, you know, whatever. It's the end of it. Right? It's like I joke with some friends, it's ammonium nitrate, stupid, that's it.

But if that were true and these OEMs are not having any ruptures, that creates an issue when it comes to what did the OEMs know about the inflators that were installed in these vehicles because, really, that is the key to the issue of standing. It is the causal link between the notion of the injury that's suffered by the plaintiffs or the putative

class --

THE COURT: Well, they just want discovery and then that way they can prove it.

MR. BIANCHI: Well, not for fraud. Right? Under Rule 9(b), the allegations have to be fairly specific, and there's been plenty of discovery here already of Takata. I think -- I mean, again, I can't be held to it because we're coming to this party quite late, but as I understand it, over 10 million pages have been produced.

THE COURT: I'll make it up to you, don't worry.

MR. BIANCHI: Fair enough.

So then the question really is, this is not a normal Complaint that's being filed in the absence of discovery. This is a Complaint which is being filed with the benefit of four years' worth of discovery where the company that just pled guilty for fraud and misleading has opened its books and discovery has happened and basically at least they would know what we allegedly knew.

THE COURT: So it should be more specific, that's basically it.

MR. BIANCHI: Well, not solely that, but if I can, then the other point I want to get to is the proposition, because the gist of what their argument has to be -- they don't say this, it's not in their pleadings, but the gist of their argument is, notwithstanding the Plea Agreement that Takata defrauded the

OEMs, notwithstanding the fact that we have now taken four years of discovery and 1.4 million documents and 10 million pages, or whatever the standard is, notwithstanding that, it has to say, notwithstanding the fact that these OEMs have gone through a process where, at least through a Special Master has concluded that they should get restitution to a certain extent from Takata with respect to those inflators for being misled, they did, in fact, know. Right? Because that's the causal link. They knew at the time the inflators were being installed that they were defective.

Really, when you're looking at it from the totally standard and the Rule 9(b) standard, you have to look at a plausibility standard and you have to see what allegations have been made that would circumvent this, circumvent the facts that are the real world facts that we're looking at in this case, at least with this group of OEMs, and those are the crucial issues.

Then I have something a little bit more particular with respect to Daimler because there are some allegations of emails there, and we asked to file them with the Court. The Court denied our request to file them.

THE COURT: Well, no, I never deny the request to file anything. You missed the word "sealed" --

MR. BIANCHI: That's correct. Sorry.

THE COURT: -- and that's the big one, see? That's the big one. You can file whatever you want.

I'm very much against sealing hardly anything. I think only one judge probably more than I, Judge King hates sealing more. I think everything should be transparent, which puts you guys sometimes in a box, but what I don't like is -- so make your argument without the sealed documents and then, if necessary, I can look at the sealed document.

MR. BIANCHI: Fair enough.

THE COURT: The problem is, on a Motion to Dismiss, I

THE COURT: The problem is, on a Motion to Dismiss, I don't know, I don't know.

MR. BIANCHI: You have some opinions out there and we're very respectful of that, but you don't want to be turning this into essentially a Motion for Summary Judgment, nor do we.

THE COURT: Oh, I would love to do that. If you're ready, let's go. That makes it easier.

MR. BIANCHI: That's not what we want, but this is it: If you look at the Complaint, specifically the allegations are all centering in paragraph, I think, 183, 185, and 314. Those are the specific allegations directed at Daimler and the basis of it is, as we can best tell, there are citations to emails there and we've been able to locate among the production --

THE COURT: Oh, you don't know the emails?

MR. BIANCHI: Well, we don't know the emails per se.
We know the dates, we know the people, so we can construct them
in the discovery which emails we believe they are.

THE COURT: Well, your opponents have the emails. They

1 won't give them to you. MR. BIANCHI: Well, I believe we both have access to 2 3 the same fountain of information. 4 THE COURT: It's a big fountain. 5 MR. BIANCHI: Yes, and that's the problem. It's so big 6 that sometimes you want to make sure that you're not saying 7 something incorrectly. But we've been able to track 15 of those emails which are the substance of emails -- the allegations 8 Those emails concern another company called at the time there. Daimler Chrysler Corporation, which is not Daimler AG, who is 10 11 the defendant here. And without getting too much into --12 THE COURT: Is Daimler Chrysler Corporation still in 13 existence? I believe -- you know, I don't -- let me 14 MR. BIANCHI: say this: There's someone here --15 16 THE COURT: It's not a trick question. MR. BIANCHI: I don't know the answer to that because 17 18 that would be -- I think the assets of that entity were bought 19 by FCA, who's standing here, and they would probably know that 20 much better than I would or could ever answer that question. 21 THE COURT: Okay. All right. 22 MR. BIANCHI: But my only point to it is: If you even 23 look at the emails without like getting into engineering speak,

which is what mostly is in them, you can tell two things.

thing is there are emails directed to or about Daimler

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1 Chrysler --2 THE COURT: The emails are part of the Complaint? 3 MR. BIANCHI: Correct and they're cited and they're 4 incorporated so you can look at them. 5 THE COURT: And they're public. 6 MR. BIANCHI: They have been stamped "highly 7 confidential." That's why we can't --8 THE COURT: So they're not part of the Complaint. MR. BIANCHI: They're referenced in the Complaint at 9 The verbiage that's in the emails seems to be reflected 10 length. 11 in the Complaint, however, the emails themselves have been 12 designated highly confidential under the Protective Order that 13 was entered into. THE COURT: Which can be modified because I signed the 14 Protective Orders because that's what you all want. If it were 15 up to me, I wouldn't sign any of them. 16 17 MR. BIANCHI: Right, but unfortunately, I believe it 18 was Takata that designated them and --19 THE COURT: The ones who pled quilty to everything, so 20 it's kind of meaningless by now. 21 MR. BIANCHI: We asked them to waive it and they didn't respond to us. 22 23 THE COURT: Well, they just want to wave good-bye if 24 you think about it. 25 MR. BIANCHI: Maybe, but this is the key point I want

1 to get to --THE COURT: I can modify that and make everything 2 3 public, right? 4 MR. BIANCHI: I don't know --5 THE COURT: You certainly would want that. 6 MR. BIANCHI: Well, I don't know enough --7 THE COURT: That way you know this is evidence. issue is: What did your client, and others, know and when did 8 9 they know it? 10 MR. BIANCHI: Exactly. THE COURT: I mean, I don't want to sound like 11 12 Watergate, but that's what it is. 13 MR. BIANCHI: Right, right, exactly. But this 14 is the key though: The allegations in the Complaint that sort 15 of support the proposition that Daimler AG knew of it before the Takata misleading and all the other stuff and the plea, those 16 17 emails were not directed at Daimler AG. They were directed at 18 Chrysler and concerned overwhelmingly -- 13 of the 15 emails 19 concerned Jeeps. They don't even concern Chrysler -- I mean 20 Daimler AG automobiles or Mercedes automobiles. 21 Let me just make sure. Two of the emails are between 22 Takata individuals and those do reference Daimler AG, but they 23 don't say anything to us or about us. Like they don't say, oh, 24 Daimler knew that the inflators are bad and we're meeting with

them to cover it up. No, no. This is them talking about

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Daimler automobiles, but that's it.

So if you look at those emails, we go back to the main proposition: What are the allegations in the Complaint that support the proposition that, in fact, there's a causal link? Meaning that Daimler AG, Volkswagen, Audi knew that the inflators were defective at the time they were being installed in the automobiles.

And then we've also added in there, on the Motion for Standing, it's our 12(b)(1) motion, we added three letters from Takata saying there's nothing wrong with your inflators.

Now, you may not want to look at that. Counsel makes a good point that in this circuit in particular, in the Eleventh Circuit, when issues of standing and merit are intertwined -- and certainly what Daimler would know would be an element for fraud and for RICO and for everything else -- you may want to push that off and it may not be appropriate for 12(b)(6). So if you want to put the letters to the side, that's sign, but I go back to the main proposition, the plea bargain and the emails make it all very clear.

THE COURT: Okay. I got it.

MR. BIANCHI: Okay.

THE COURT: All right. Is there someone from Audi or Volkswagen who wants to chime in? No one responds. So you've covered all of them.

MR. BIANCHI: I believe I have.

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             THE COURT: Look at that. All right. So does the
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    plaintiff wish to respond?
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             MR. PRIETO: Yes, Your Honor.
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             THE COURT: Now, what's the easiest thing to do with
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    these emails in order to modify the Confidentiality Order so
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    that we know exactly who knew what when? That makes it easier,
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    right?
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             MR. PRIETO: That's correct. I mean, we are --
                         So what do I need to do regarding that?
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             THE COURT:
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                         If they're willing to waive
             MR. PRIETO:
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    confidentiality, we can make them public.
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             THE COURT:
                         Okay. Who is "they?"
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             MR. PRIETO: Mercedes Daimler.
             THE COURT: Okay. Make it public. They say it's not
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15
    us, so you don't have standing.
16
                           Right. Your Honor, we would love to do
             MR. BIANCHI:
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          The problem is, we didn't designate them confidential and
    we don't want to be -- we don't want the Court or someone else
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19
    to run in there at some future point and say, ah, Bianchi
20
    violated the Protective Order.
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             THE COURT: No, no one would do that. Who can modify
22
    that Protective Order?
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             MR. PRIETO: It would be probably us and Takata
24
    agreeing to --
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             THE COURT: No, but who -- okay.
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             MR. PRIETO: You would modify it if necessary.
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             THE COURT:
                         Can I do it on my own?
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             MR. PRIETO: You can do it on your own.
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             THE COURT:
                         Why shouldn't I do that?
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             MR. PRIETO: You should. We have no problem.
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             THE COURT:
                         Let the cat out of the bag.
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             MR. PRIETO: We have no problem with that, Your Honor,
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    except that Takata, I think, in whatever form they are --
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                         Is there anyone here from Takata? They
             THE COURT:
    never come. You know why they don't come? They're guilty and
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11
    bankrupt. I mean, I hate to be so bottom line, but that's it.
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    Right? They've got more problems than filing a Motion for
13
    Violation of Confidentiality. They pled guilty. That was all
    public. It's all public.
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             See, that's why I don't like to seal things at this
           There's nothing to seal. Everybody knows about it,
16
    stage.
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    except you have to prove, do you not, that these defendants
18
    knew.
          Right? They're not just victims. So what do I do with
19
          And the way you prove it is through these emails
    that?
20
    directly.
21
             MR. PRIETO: We prove it through emails and other
22
    information. But this issue --
23
                         But you have to have it in the Complaint,
             THE COURT:
24
    don't you think?
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             MR. PRIETO: We do have it, we have a lot of
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information in the Complaint. 1 2 Why not put these emails and that takes THE COURT: 3 care of it --MR. PRIETO: We did reference --4 5 THE COURT: -- by quotes. 6 MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, we did reference a lot of 7 these emails in the Complaint without actually saying because we didn't want violate the Protective Order --8 9 THE COURT: Let's modify the Protective Order. 10 MR. PRIETO: We put some general -- I think we reached 11 agreement with Takata to be able to --12 THE COURT: You don't need agreement, you've got my 13 I'm modifying the Confidentiality Order. Why am I modifying? Because it was for the benefit of the plaintiffs, 14 15 who waived, and Takata, which has pled quilty, and there's a Restitution Order and sanctions imposed by another judge in 16 another district. So it is modified. They've waived. When you 17 18 plead quilty, you waive just about everything, including that. 19 You can't have that confidentiality. And these defendants are 20 saying they're victims. The judge who accepted the guilty plea accepted the fact that these defendants are guilty. 21 22 You disagree with that, that they are victims? 23 I disagree, Your Honor, for a couple of MR. PRIETO: 24 reasons.

THE COURT: No one said they're victims?

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They did. There was a general reference MR. PRIETO: that certain automakers were victims of Takata. THE COURT: Which ones? MR. PRIETO: It's unclear. The plea has --THE COURT: Let's make it clear. That's the issue. MR. PRIETO: Here's the other issue: A Special Master -- now, they told you that there was fact-finding involved with this plea. There really wasn't, except Takata essentially admitting, as you know in a corporate plea, to certain facts. One of those facts that Takata admitted to was that the OEMs -- excuse me -- the automakers, not Takata, would not have bought these cars had it not been for Takata's -excuse me -- the inflators but for Takata's fraud. Now, listen to what the Special Master said. This is what happened: Takata enters into a plea where the allegation is that the automakers were the victims. No automakers are named in the plea or any of the information in that plea. The automakers then get together and do an allocation, okay. There's \$800 million. Let's allocate it amongst ourselves. They reached agreement and this is what the Special Master appointed in that case said about whether any of these automakers were victims. No such finding was ever made, and this was from the Special Master's Request for Final Approval of

Allocation and Distribution of OEM Restitution Fund.

It's United States versus Takata Corporation,

16-CR-2081004, filed on February the 1st, 2018. This is what 1 2 the Special Master said at paragraph 13, Page 5 of this 3 document, Your Honor: 4 "The proposed final allocation is based on three main 5 principles. First, the two OEM restitution funds are 6 combined into one single" --7 THE COURT: Slow down for the court reporter. 8 MR. PRIETO: I'm sorry. -- "into one single global fund. Each eligible OEM, "which stands for original 9 10 equipment maker, "will recover from the single fund." 11 And here is what's important, this is what the Special 12 Master says: 13 "This is consistent with the recommendation of the consenting OEMs and obviates the need to determine whether a 14 15 particular OEM can demonstrate that it was a victim of 16 Takata's fraud." And the Special Master puts "victim" in quotes. 17 So the Special Master never made a finding as to which of the 18 automakers were victims as a result of the criminal --19 20 Well, this was in February. THE COURT: 21 MR. PRIETO: This was in February of this year. The Restitution Order was entered. 22 THE COURT: 23 MR. PRIETO: Correct. 24 THE COURT: What has happened since then about that? 25 MR. PRIETO: I assume that they received their monies

but there was never --

THE COURT: So there had to be some decision before they got their money.

MR. PRIETO: I think the only decision was that they came to agreement on an allocation, and the monies flowed based on the agreement of that allocation.

THE COURT: And I can't infer from that anything?

MR. PRIETO: You cannot infer because the Special

Master has said that this "obviates the need to determine whether a particular OEM can demonstrate that it was a victim of Takata's fraud."

So no such finding was ever made. And, Your Honor, the important thing about the Takata Plea Agreement, which the Court heard argument before, is they may claim that this absolves them. That's what Honda came in here and said about a year and a half ago.

Our position has always been the same.

THE COURT: Well, when they came was before or after the plea?

MR. PRIETO: It was after the plea. They said it was a game changer, and our position has been consistent. Takata may have told you certain things in certain testing that was not true, but we have independent evidence that you knew -- despite what Takata was telling you -- you knew that these inflators were defective.

1 You have independent evidence. THE COURT: MR. PRIETO: Yes. We've alleged independent evidence. 2 3 THE COURT: And that is in which paragraph of the 4 Complaint? 5 MR. PRIETO: I'll read it to you. 6 THE COURT: 183, 185, or 314? 7 MR. PRIETO: As to Mercedes, I'll give you just a few 8 examples. Paragraph 10: Before equipping -- this is not a quote, this is a summary of the allegation. Excuse me. 9 10 Paragraph 10: "Before equipping its vehicles with 11 ammonium nitrate Takata airbags --" 12 THE COURT: Slow down. 13 MR. PRIETO: I'm sorry. Paragraph 10: "Before equipping its vehicles with 14 15 ammonium nitrate Takata airbags, Mercedes expressed concerns 16 over signs of over-pressurization, module cover tearing, 17 cushion tearing, all signs of serious inflator and 18 propellant problems." Paragraph 11: "Despite testing concerns and despite 19 20 Mercedes' knowledge that Takata airbags failed to meet a key 21 set of industry standards, Mercedes approved multiple models 22 of ammonium nitrate inflators. Indeed, Mercedes went so far 23 as to waive key performance variables and accept deviations 24 to get the airbags approved." 25 So that Your Honor understands, all these automakers

give Takata specifications. Takata must meet them. In a lot of instances, several of these automakers waived those specifications because Takata simply couldn't meet them.

Here is another one: "Mercedes knew prior to approving the defective airbags that Takata used an ammonium nitrate as a propellent which it market as an inexpensive propellent to reduced Mercedes' costs."

Paragraph 183: "In April or May of 2003 --" 2003.

Remember that the first major recall was in 2014. We are going back to 2003.

Paragraph 183: "In April or May of 2003, Mercedes recognized that the defective airbags failed to meet Mercedes' own standards for approval. Prior to approval, Mercedes employees raised concerns that the inflator was the cause of module performance issues, including, 'module cover tearing,' and 'cushion tearing'."

"In July of 2005, a Daimler Chrysler airbag engineer sent an email to Takata reflecting that Mercedes engineers were aware of inflator performance problems and Takata's difficulty in meeting U.S. car standards prior to approving the defective inflators for installation in Mercedes vehicles."

Paragraph 185: "The same Mercedes engineers repeatedly expressed concerns with the PSD 15 inflator in pre-approval testing."

1 THE COURT: But there's no denial by you that Takata 2 provided false, fraudulent, and misleading test information and 3 data to the so-called OEMs, right? Right? 4 MR. PRIETO: We don't quibble with the fact that Takata 5 has pled guilty to that. THE COURT: No, no, no. That's not I'm saying. 6 7 I'm saying is that they provided misleading and fraudulent 8 information and data to the OEMs. 9 MR. PRIETO: To some OEMs, yes. They pled to that and we take that for a fact. 10 11 THE COURT: It's true. So that --12 MR. PRIETO: Some OEMs, unknown OEMs. 13 THE COURT: Unknown. 14 MR. PRIETO: Yes. 15 THE COURT: So the issue is: Who are the victim OEMs? 16 MR. PRIETO: That's not the issue, Your Honor, 17 because --That's one of the issues. 18 THE COURT: 19 MR. PRIETO: That's their position, that they were 20 victims. Our position --21 THE COURT: But that's also what happened in court. 22 MR. PRIETO: That's what Takata pled guilty to, but 23 just because one person in a conspiracy -- and we make this argument in terms of RICO. There's no honor among thieves, 24 okay, and in a conspiracy for example, let's talk about RICO --25

1 I understand. But you agree that some THE COURT: 2 fraud was committed by Takata upon these defendants. 3 MR. PRIETO: Some misrepresentations were made by Takata to some of these defendants, we don't know who, but to 4 5 some of these. 6 THE COURT: Your opponents say you've got to know who 7 because under Rule 9, you've got to be specific when it comes to 8 fraud, right? MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, that's an affirmative defense. 9 Number one, it's an affirmative defense that they need to make 10 11 and raise, that they had no knowledge. 12 THE COURT: You don't have to be specific in fraud? 13 MR. PRIETO: We have been specific in terms of what we have alleged they knew about the problem. Just because somebody 14 15 lies to somebody about certain things --16 THE COURT: But this is no secret, right, who the OEMs are? 17 It seems like it's a secret? Everybody knows who they 18 are. 19 MR. PRIETO: We know who they are generally. We have 20 no idea --21 What do you mean, generally? You don't THE COURT: 22 know who they are specifically? 23 MR. PRIETO: Based on the documents that we've 24 reviewed, we don't know who the OEMs are --25 THE COURT: Really?

1 MR. PRIETO: -- that were lied to, that Takata lied to 2 or misrepresented to. 3 THE COURT: So who's getting money? So some people are 4 getting money for nothing. 5 MR. PRIETO: They came to an agreement, and as I said, the Special Master said there is no need to determine who was a 6 7 victim of the Takata fraud. 8 THE COURT: So someone is getting tens of millions of dollars without being a victim. 9 10 MR. PRIETO: They didn't have to prove it to anyone. 11 THE COURT: Wow. Because everybody agreed. 12 MR. PRIETO: Correct. I'm reading from --13 That doesn't count for anything. THE COURT: MR. PRIETO: I'm reading from the Special Master's 14 report. 15 16 THE COURT: Wow. But I think, you know, the other issue is 17 MR. PRIETO: 18 that --19 THE COURT: It's hard enough to get victims restitution 20 Here it doesn't mean anything you're saying. money. 21 MR. PRIETO: That case could have been charged 22 differently. That case could have been charged as a wire/mail 23 fraud case to the consumers. It wasn't charged that way. 24 THE COURT: But it means something. It has to mean 25 something. It doesn't help you.

1 MR. PRIETO: Your Honor --2 THE COURT: Does it? 3 No, it doesn't help us, but it doesn't --MR. PRIETO: 4 in any way, shape, or form does it hurt our case. We're going 5 to be able to prove that they knew independent of what Takata was telling them about the defect. 6 7 THE COURT: And the main proof that you allege are these emails. 8 9 Not only the emails. MR. PRIETO: 10 THE COURT: The emails is the main thing. 11 I don't know if they're emails -- not all MR. PRIETO: 12 of these allegations are based on emails. I mean, we did some 13 independent investigation. I want you to know --THE COURT: Now that I've modified the Confidentiality 14 15 Order, the better thing to do would be let you amend that 16 Complaint and set out what the emails say about a specific OEM. 17 MR. PRIETO: Your Honor --THE COURT: Wouldn't that be better? You're going to 18 have to do it anyway. 19 20 MR. PRIETO: We have already done that. 21 THE COURT: That specifically? 22 MR. PRIETO: Well, we haven't quoted from like this 23 email in terms of --24 Why not do it that way? THE COURT: 25 MR. PRIETO: We could, but here's the other --

THE COURT: Why not?

MR. PRIETO: Let me clarify something also for the Court, because counsel for Daimler got up here and said there's a huge fountain of information. Well, there is a huge fountain of information that we got from Takata, but none of these automakers have produced -- I shouldn't say all of them. The four new ones have not produced -- well, they produced recently, which we've not reviewed yet, they produced recently records, but in the original litigation, none of these automakers, the new ones, produced records to us.

THE COURT: Well, they weren't in the case.

MR. PRIETO: Correct. So my only point is that you have to understand that the information we got to use in these Complaints were information we gleaned from Takata, not from these automakers.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. PRIETO: I want to make that clear.

THE COURT: But now you've got more. Put it in there. What's wrong with putting it in there?

MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, we can put it in here, but I think what we've put in there --

THE COURT: That way we know what you say they knew and when. Email 1, email 2, email 3, this proves knowledge, they know. They can defend themselves. Yeah, you weren't really a victim. I don't know what that does to the Restitution Order.

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I don't know if you can change that. I'm not going to get into whether you can change prior orders or not. It's none of my business, that. But this case, it seems fair that they should know. You're going to have to tell them anyway. MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, if we're talking about -maybe I misunderstand. When we drafted this Complaint we had some documents and emails --I understand that, but now you are clear THE COURT: about what emails he's talking about that they wanted to say they're sealed. They're no longer going to be sealed, nothing is going to be sealed. Just say whoever, Mercedes, Chrysler, Audi, Volkswagen, this is how we prove they knew as of this date. You know how we can prove that they knew as of this date? They were told, look at this email. What's wrong with doing it that way? MR. PRIETO: We can put as much information as the Court wants us --THE COURT: I just want the emails that have not been previously made public, how about that, that directly show knowledge of a fraud on the part of a defendant. MR. PRIETO: And we are operating under the plausibility standard, correct? THE COURT: Always. MR. PRIETO: Always.

THE COURT: But if you have a direct email, you don't

1 have any problems. That's fine, we can do that. 2 MR. PRIETO: 3 THE COURT: You say you have that. Do you? 4 MR. PRIETO: We have some emails from Takata --5 THE COURT: Then it won't even be that many. You can 6 put them in there and they know. 7 MR. PRIETO: They were referenced in the Complaint, they just weren't identified as a particular email. 8 9 THE COURT: But, see, if you identify it as a particular email on a particular date to a particular person, 10 11 then it's foolproof, right? 12 MR. PRIETO: That's fine. THE COURT: They know how to defend, you know how to 13 14 attack. We know, let's go, play ball. 15 MR. PRIETO: We can do that, Your Honor, and just to be 16 clear --17 THE COURT: Is there anything wrong with that? 18 MR. PRIETO: Nothing wrong, but we think we've met more 19 so than -- we've met the plausibility standard based on what 20 we've alleged. 21 But this is better. THE COURT: If that's what the Court wants --22 MR. PRIETO: 23 THE COURT: And you can do that in a couple of days 24 because you've got them already. The only issue is that they were sealed, part of a Confidentiality Order that has been 25

1 modified. So, boom, you can flick it on, put it in there as indicated in the email as to this defendant, done. 2 3 MR. PRIETO: We can put all the emails concerning these defendants assuming they have no problem with us revealing 4 5 certain information about them in the public record, but we're 6 willing to do that. 7 THE COURT: Well, you're not going to reveal that at 8 trial --9 MR. PRIETO: Yes, of course. -- or at the summary judgment? 10 THE COURT: 11 MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, the Protective Order is never 12 our issue; it's their issue. They have reasons --13 THE COURT: It's not their issue if they weren't part of it, right? 14 15 MR. PRIETO: Right. It's Takata's issue and people don't have 16 THE COURT: 17 standing if they weren't. You've got to prove fraud. They're saying you have not even alleged sufficient fraud. 18 19 MR. PRIETO: And we have. 20 The best way to say it, okay, you want me THE COURT: 21 to be more specific? Here it comes. Here are the bullets. 22 Now, I don't want you to do a shotgun and all kinds of shells 23 all over the place. Be specific, this email as to this 24 defendant, this email as to that defendant. Can we do that? 25 MR. PRIETO: We have done that already, but we will do

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    it in the specificity that you're asking because --
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             THE COURT: Then, that takes care of it, right?
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             MR. PRIETO: That's fine, we can do that.
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             THE COURT: You wouldn't even need -- the next Motion
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    to Dismiss, denied, they've done enough. Let's move.
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   makes sense, right?
                        That's what I should do.
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             MR. PRIETO: You can do that, but I think you're asking
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    us to do something --
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             THE COURT:
                         That you don't really have to do.
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             MR. PRIETO: Of course, but we --
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             THE COURT:
                         But you're going to do later on anyway.
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             MR. PRIETO: Not necessarily.
13
             THE COURT:
                         So do it earlier.
             MR. PRIETO: We could do that. The only difference,
14
   Your Honor, is we don't have any records from these defendants
15
16
   yet.
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             THE COURT:
                         Okay. But you say you've got enough from
18
    other people.
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             MR. PRIETO: We have sufficient, which we've included
20
    in these Complaints, from Takata.
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             THE COURT: Without reference to --
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             MR. PRIETO: Yes.
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             THE COURT:
                        -- who got what.
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             MR. PRIETO: Yes.
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             THE COURT: Well, that's what I want you to do.
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MR. PRIETO: I don't want to belabor it, Your Honor. We did say who got what, but not with the specificity that Your Honor is requiring. THE COURT: I know, but that's what they're complaining about. MR. PRIETO: I'm not sure that's their only complaint, but that's okay. THE COURT: That's not their only complaint, just like it's not the only emails that you have. You're afraid that -you want to get more, I know. Of course, you're going to get more, you think, because you always get more. Complaints shouldn't have everything in the case, that would be ridiculous. I think defendants would sometimes differ MR. PRIETO: in terms of how much should be in the Complaint. That's why Complaints now are a hundred pages, where in the old days it used to be 20 pages. THE COURT: Okay. But that's because today we dismiss more Complaints than we used to. MR. PRIETO: Probably because of the higher standard. So meet the higher standard and you're THE COURT: safe. MR. PRIETO: We've met it and we'll meet it again, Your Honor. THE COURT: Okay. Meet the higher standard again in 25 your view, for the first time in the defendants' view. I don't

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care what the word is. If you've got to do it, you do it.
thing that was blocking it was the Confidentiality Order and
I've opened that up.
                     Right?
        MR. PRIETO: That's fine, Your Honor.
         THE COURT:
                    Or am I missing something?
         MR. PRIETO:
                     No, I don't think that we -- there was a
Confidentiality Order --
                    That's been taken care of, right?
         THE COURT:
         MR. PRIETO:
                     Right.
                    It seems like you're afraid of doing
         THE COURT:
something. I'm not understanding.
        MR. PRIETO:
                     No, I'm not afraid. It's doing something
where we think we've already met the standard, but we'll do it
again.
       Your Honor --
         THE COURT:
                    It won't be the first time --
        MR. PRIETO: Of course not.
         THE COURT: -- that a lawyer does something thinking
that they don't have to do, that they've already done, but if
you do it, it takes care of it. In your view, it should help
you because then you're more specific, you've alleged it, and
you say, well, now they even want more. No. You get more now
in discovery if it's true. But if I think you don't have enough
once we have those specifics, then you are in trouble. Right?
        MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, we think we have enough now.
        THE COURT:
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Obviously.

1 MR. PRIETO: Yes. Every plaintiff thinks they have enough. 2 THE COURT: 3 If not, they wouldn't have filed the Complaint in the first 4 place. 5 Okay. Now, what about this: You agree with this, 6 right, do you not? 7 "Each plaintiff within the proposed class must show 8 that he suffered an injury that is traceable to a 9 defendant's action." 10 You agree with that. 11 MR. PRIETO: Of course. 12 THE COURT: Okay. Usually I start out with the first 13 statement and I get you to first base. 14 Now, if I look at this Complaint with Volkswagen and 15 Audi, you've done that in your view. 16 MR. PRIETO: Of course. 17 THE COURT: And how have you done that? 18 MR. PRIETO: We've done it very simply and I'll make 19 one point and answer your question. 20 What you're seeing here are the same arguments made 21 previously repackaged. For example, manifestation is really 22 standing. There's no injury because it hasn't manifested, so 23 therefore, there's no standing. So the arguments about 24 injury --25 THE COURT: You think Volkswagen and Audi are in the

1 same boat as the others? MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, we've alleged very specific 2 3 concrete financial harm. One, our class members overpaid. 4 THE COURT: By Volkswagen and Audi. 5 Of course. As to each automaker we have MR. PRIETO: 6 alleged --7 I just want to talk about Volkswagen and THE COURT: 8 Audi. MR. PRIETO: Volkswagen and Audi, we have alleged 9 specifically they overpaid for their cars, which is a benefit of 10 11 the bargain theory of damages, which the Eleventh Circuit has 12 accepted, because when a defective car by definition and by 13 common sense is worth less than a --THE COURT: And it's traceable to these defendants how, 14 the same thing? 15 16 MR. PRIETO: Very easy. They knew of the defect, they 17 failed to disclose it, they misrepresented the cars were safe, and these people bought the cars; and each class plaintiff, each 18 19 plaintiff has alleged had I known of this, had I known of this, 20 I would not have purchased the car or I would have paid less. 21 THE COURT: So we're back to the original issue of when 22 did they know about the fraud since they're allegedly victims of 23 the fraud themselves. 24 MR. PRIETO: And we've alleged that they knew about the

fraud before our class members purchased these cars and that,

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Your Honor, to be frank with the Court, we can allege it, but that's a jury question, what they knew and when did they know it.

THE COURT: It could be a summary judgment question, too.

MR. PRIETO: Well, of course, but once we have discovery from them, yes.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. PRIETO: Just so the Court is aware, injury in fact for standing purposes can be alleged generally. It doesn't have to be alleged -- we have alleged it with more specificity than is required. So for allegation purposes, injury in fact -- the Eleventh Circuit has said this and I think Your Honor has also said it -- needs to be alleged generally. And like I said, you know, there's a case where Your Honor was involved in in terms of -- you may remember, it's a recent case involving some weapons. The same argument was made that these defendants are making here, and this is what this Court said:

"Plaintiffs argue that standing is sufficient where plaintiffs claim economic harm such as overpayment, loss of value, or loss of usefulness emanating from the loss of their benefit of the bargain. Indeed, if benefit of the bargain damages are theoretically available for the causes of action that have been asserted, dismissal on the pleadings is premature."

1 THE COURT: Which case is that? 2 MR. PRIETO: That's the case where there was a defect 3 in the safety of the guns and four out of the five plaintiffs in 4 that case had never sustained -- the gun had never misfired when it was placed on safety, and the Court basically said that when 5 6 you allege overpayment --THE COURT: It's a Fort Lauderdale case. 7 8 MR. PRIETO: I'm sorry? THE COURT: It's a Fort Lauderdale case that I hope I 9 can dump on a new Fort Lauderdale judge. 10 11 MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, we have been very specific as 12 to injury in fact. 13 I got it. I got it. THE COURT: 14 MR. PRIETO: And again, this whole issue of tracing, 15 traceability, that's causation by another name, which we dealt with previously. So the so-called standing injury in fact, 16 17 that's manifestation by any other name. 18 THE COURT: While I've got you on the floor, what do 19 you want to say -- rather than you standing up each time, what 20 do you want to say about this direct filing into the Southern 21 District argument, if you are going to be the one arguing that? 22 I am, Your Honor, because we've had MR. PRIETO: 23 discussions about direct filing, and we did essentially what we 24 told the Court we were going to do. We didn't direct file.

What we did was, when Your Honor said -- you may remember, there

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was a point in time when you said, what are we going to do with the new defendants? I told the Court I believe back in 2016, or early 2017, we have two defendants that are already in the MDL. That was VW and GM I believe, or maybe FCA and GM. And you said, look --

THE COURT: They were in, transferred from the Multidistrict Panel.

MR. PRIETO: Correct. They were already here and you actually asked us: Can you direct file here? We researched it and the JPML permits you to direct file here, and basically, once you direct file here, the local rules require the Court or the judge that received it that's not the MDL Court, to transfer it here.

So one, you basically said, I don't want you bringing in new defendants under this current Complaint because discovery is far along and they're going to say, it's too far along, you know, we don't have any chance for discovery. So we essentially, after two or three hearings, did what you wanted us to do, and what we did was as follows:

We filed in the home districts, either the principal place of business or headquarters, for each of these defendants as to non-Florida plaintiffs. We filed there. Then we filed a JPML tagalong notice with the JPML and then we filed a Consolidated Complaint with all the plaintiffs, non-Florida and Florida, here based on your request that we do that. That's

1 what we did. 2 THE COURT: Was I wrong in doing that? 3 MR. PRIETO: No, you were not wrong in doing that. I 4 have the transcripts if the Court wants to --5 No, no, no, I remember saying it. THE COURT: be wrong even when you have a transcript. I know I said it. 6 7 MR. PRIETO: So here's the alternative world --8 THE COURT: On occasion I'm wrong. 9 I don't know what they would want us to MR. PRIETO: 10 do. 11 Well, that's what I'm going to ask them. THE COURT: 12 MR. PRIETO: Because if you unravel this Complaint, you 13 know, we're going to have to go file in the other districts and 14 then, you know -- I just don't know exactly what the solution 15 is. 16 Let's find out what they want us to do. THE COURT: MR. PRIETO: 17 But we did everything appropriately, we 18 filed in the home districts, filed the tagalong, and then filed 19 the Consolidated Complaint with all the plaintiffs, Florida and 20 non-Florida, here per your instructions. 21 The last point I'll make on this issue is, they raise 22 this issue about, well, they've trying to sort of take away our 23 jury right in our in the transferor district. That's not an 24 issue that the Court needs to make now. Your Honor is a 1407 25 MDL Court and you're going to do all the pretrial proceedings.

1 When these cases are ripe for trial, then Your Honor will say, 2 okay, this case can be tried here and that case can go back to 3 its district. 4 THE COURT: Well, in order to go back to the district, 5 it has to come from there in the first place. 6 MR. PRIETO: And we did, that's what I'm telling the 7 Court that --8 THE COURT: So every defendant that's complaining about 9 this direct file has had a case filed in another district? 10 MR. PRIETO: In their home district, their so-called 11 home district. We filed there and then we filed a Consolidated 12 Complaint with those and these Florida plaintiffs here. 13 THE COURT: And those cases have been transferred also? 14 MR. PRIETO: Correct. 15 THE COURT: So it's like duplicate. 16 MR. PRIETO: Well, because we wanted to obviate --17 THE COURT: But that's what has happened, we have duplication. We have the case that has been transferred that 18 19 has been placed in civil suspense, and the Amended Complaint 20 that includes all of these defendants. 21 MR. PRIETO: Right, but I wouldn't call it duplication; I would call it consolidation. So we consolidated the claims --22 23 THE COURT: Well, what happened to the case that you 24 filed in another district? 25 MR. PRIETO: Came here and you placed --

1 THE COURT: It came here. I would assume it's been placed on civil 2 MR. PRIETO: suspense, but the allegations in those cases --3 4 THE COURT: -- are in the Amended Complaint. 5 MR. PRIETO: Correct. 6 THE COURT: All right. I understand. That's what I 7 thought. Let me find out from your opponents why they don't like that. 8 9 Okay. Who's going to speak for a defendant? 10 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Good now afternoon, Your Honor. 11 THE COURT: Yeah, I'm sorry. 12 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: It's okay. We're here. 13 appreciate you taking the time to hear from us today. 14 My name is Brian Glueckstein with Sullivan & Cromwell. 15 I represent FCA US, LLC. 16 THE COURT: Okay. 17 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: In response to Your Honor's question, the issue here and the reason why we're making this an issue is 18 19 because the question is one that the plaintiffs are trying to 20 rely on general jurisdiction in each defendant's home district. 21 And the issue here, Your Honor --22 THE COURT: So you'd rather be in these other 23 districts. You don't want to be transferred by the 24 Multidistrict Panel as a tagalong, right? MR. GLUECKSTEIN: That claim --25

1 THE COURT: You don't want to be transferred. You've objected. You said, Multidistrict Panel, do not send us to 2 3 Moreno in Miami. You did that? 4 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: No, Your Honor. 5 THE COURT: What happened before the Multidistrict 6 Panel? 7 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: All that has happened with respect to the case that was filed there, and it was filed mere hours 8 before the case was filed here on this Court's docket, is that the case was transferred here and put into civil suspense. 10 11 THE COURT: Well, but when it was transferred here, the 12 Multidistrict Panel is very conscientious, they do things 13 conditionally, they give you notice to see if anybody objects. True? 14 15 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: I believe that is typically the way the Multidistrict Panel works, Your Honor. 16 17 THE COURT: They didn't do it in this case? They said, 18 we're not doing this right now, we don't even want to hear from 19 anybody opposing it. It goes to Moreno in Miami no matter what 20 anybody says. Did they do that? They didn't do that, did they? 21 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: I can't represent that that's what 22 happened, Your Honor. 23 THE COURT: They gave you a chance to object. You 24 don't object. So if you don't object, why are you objecting 25 here? You'd rather be there, you should have told the

Multidistrict Panel, unless you really don't want to be in a 1 2 bunch of different districts. 3 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Well, Your Honor, we certainly would be happy -- not happy -- but willing to defend that action, at 4 5 least as to FCA, where it was filed in Michigan. But the 6 question Your Honor --7 THE COURT: So you should have objected to a transfer. 8 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Your Honor just asked the question of 9 plaintiffs whether the claims are duplicative, whether these 10 Complaints --11 THE COURT: No, but before we get to that, even if 12 they're duplicative, the reason they might be duplicative is 13 because -- and maybe I made mistake in doing one Amended Complaint including everyone, you know. There's probably 14 different ways of doing it. I should have divided and conguer 15 maybe, just do one at a time. All right. I said, let's put 16 17 everything together. But your issue here is, as I understood it, perhaps 18 19 wrongly, hey, they're bypassing the Multidistrict, I'm not even 20 going to get my jury trial. They didn't really do that, did 21 they? 22 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: The issue, Your Honor --23 THE COURT: Did they do that? 24 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Did they bypass the --25 THE COURT: -- Multidistrict Panel.

1 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: No, Your Honor. 2 THE COURT: Okay. So they sent it to me. What can I 3 do? 4 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: The question here --5 I have to accept it, right? THE COURT: 6 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: I'm sorry, Your Honor. The question 7 is -- of course, you can accept the claim that was tagged in and 8 transferred in. The question here and the issue that the defendants have raised is one of personal jurisdiction. not an issue that's addressed by the panel. That's not an issue 10 11 that's addressed by the tag-in process. 12 THE COURT: That's an issue that would be raised in 13 every case that the Multidistrict Panel sends. See, if I ruled 14 your way on this -- oh, my goodness, it's a dramatic order that 15 you want that basically would eliminate what the Multidistrict Panel and what Congress wanted, don't you think? 16 17 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: I don't, Your Honor. 18 THE COURT: That's a big one, which, by the way, 19 doesn't help defendants in many cases. 20 In that situation, Your Honor, you MR. GLUECKSTEIN: have a Complaint that was filed. That Complaint would have been 21 22 transferred to Your Honor. It was. 23 THE COURT: 24 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: And that is not the Complaint that's 25 before Your Honor on the Motion to Dismiss. That's the problem.

1 The problem is, that Complaint is sitting in civil suspense. 2 That Complaint is a subset of the claims that are asserted in this Complaint. 3 4 THE COURT: So you'd rather be separate in that 5 So if I take you out, have that Complaint 6 separately, then you have no objections to anything because it 7 was transferred by the Multidistrict. You'd rather be that way. 8 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: That Complaint, Your Honor --THE COURT: Would you rather be that way? 9 10 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: We would have to defend that 11 Complaint, and we're happy to do so. 12 THE COURT: So that's what I should do. So what I 13 should do is reactivate that particular Complaint, eliminate it from the civil suspense, boom, put it on a fast-track pretrial, 14 15 get it ready for trial, and send it back to Detroit, Michigan, wherever it was, right? You would be in agreement with that? 16 17 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: We agree that that's how the rules would work. 18 19 THE COURT: That's what you want. 20 Yes, Your Honor, because --MR. GLUECKSTEIN: 21 THE COURT: Okay. What's wrong with doing that for 22 this particular defendant? 23 MR. PRIETO: Because it doesn't make any sense. 24 THE COURT: Well, it may not be administratively the 25 ideal thing, but it's divide and conquer.

MR. PRIETO: So we're having two Complaints, non-Florida plaintiffs, one Complaint here, and Florida plaintiffs also in another Complaint here.

THE COURT: You filed it there, we will move it super fast, we'll give it top priority. It's easy. Divide and conquer. What's wrong with that?

MR. PRIETO: Because the claims, Your Honor, are the same as to all the plaintiffs.

THE COURT: I understand. It's more work for me, more work for you, less work for this defendant, but we can move this one fast, which the plaintiff would like.

MR. PRIETO: And this is contrary, Your Honor, to, number one, MDL practice, which is to consolidate all the claims because they all share the same sort of issues, facts, number one.

Number two, you know, we've got RICO claims here that encompass not simply Florida plaintiffs, but also non-Florida plaintiffs, so this belongs in one Complaint. This doesn't make any sense at all. I mean it's -- and the fact that we're here is to do everything that needs to be done pretrial among all the plaintiffs and all the claims in one court.

THE COURT: Okay. But then, at the end, let's say summary judgment is denied, some claims remain, some are thrown out, there's something left. It's going to be sent back. The whole Complaint can't be sent back to -- how do we send it back

to the other districts? How do I do that? 1 2 MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, assuming a RICO nationwide 3 class needs to be sent back to the other district, which I don't 4 believe that's necessary -- I think you can try a RICO class action here in this courtroom. 5 6 THE COURT: But there are other claims. What do I do 7 with the other claims? 8 MR. PRIETO: Well, the other claims --9 THE COURT: You could always voluntarily dismiss, and then that would take care of it. 10 11 MR. PRIETO: We could voluntarily dismiss the other 12 claims if --13 THE COURT: You could do it beforehand and that would be easier. 14 15 MR. PRIETO: Well, I think it's premature to say which claims we would dismiss, but, you know, I think that the -- in 16 17 terms of the other claims, you would have jurisdiction under 18 pendent or supplemental jurisdiction as to the other claims 19 assuming we needed to try those, assuming we needed to try 20 those. 21 THE COURT: Then, that would mean that anytime there's 22 RICO and supplemental jurisdiction, I can keep the case and try 23 it. Is that how it's done? MR. PRIETO: I think, Your Honor --24

THE COURT: Nothing is sent back. So in your view,

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nothing is sent back. In your opponent's view, everything should be sent back, but he really doesn't want to say that because he hasn't said that. He hasn't been cornered sufficiently to say that because be careful what you want, this judge may be crazy enough to give you what you want, and then all of a sudden, oh, my goodness.

MR. PRIETO: I am not saying that. I think when it comes to State law claims only --

THE COURT: You agree it should be sent back.

MR. PRIETO: No. Depending on what the State law claims are.

THE COURT: So then nothing gets sent back. So Lexecon is out the window.

MR. PRIETO: No, no. Obviously, this is a little bit different because we're not talking about individual claims; we're talking about a class action. So individual claims obviously go back to their districts, and I think certain class actions based on State law claims may go back. When you're talking about a national class action under RICO or a Federal statute, I think this Court has jurisdiction to try that class assuming it's got Florida plaintiffs and Florida class members, which this Court has a lot of.

THE COURT: So that would mean that, in essence, if you file a class action and include RICO, you've gotten rid of Lexecon.

1 MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, I don't know the answer to 2 that. 3 THE COURT: But that's kind of what you're saying. 4 MR. PRIETO: I think if you have a nationwide class --5 Lexecon is Supreme Court, right? I THE COURT: 6 certainly wouldn't want to do that. 7 MR. PRIETO: Yes. I think that if you've got 8 jurisdiction here because you have Florida plaintiffs and you're dealing with a Federal statute like RICO --10 THE COURT: Well, but the judge who gets the case would 11 obviously have a reason to get the case transferred to him or 12 her, right, probably on a class action? I'm not sure they would pick a judge -- maybe they could. They've done that I guess, 13 14 but usually there's some connection, right? 15 They tend to send it to jurists with a lot MR. PRIETO: 16 of experience. 17 THE COURT: With some connection with the case, too. 18 They don't just pick out --19 MR. PRIETO: That's true, Your Honor, yes. 20 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Your Honor, if I may, this gets to 21 the heart of the issue Mr. Prieto is hitting on. The question 22 is, Your Honor is being asked to adjudicate this direct file 23 There's no transferred case and we just heard counsel case. 24 say --25 THE COURT: No, there is one. There is a transferred

1 case. MR. GLUECKSTEIN: There is, but that's not the case 2 3 that's before you for any of these defendants. 4 THE COURT: It is, it's part of it. 5 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: It's part of the MDL, but there's a 6 separate Complaint with a separate docket number. 7 THE COURT: But it has the same claims. 8 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: It has those claims plus other 9 claims. 10 No question about that. THE COURT: 11 That includes the RICO claims MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Okay. 12 that --13 THE COURT: That gives more nationwide jurisdiction. MR. GLUECKSTEIN: If those claims are sustained. 14 15 defendants have all moved that those should be dismissed pursuant to 12(b)(6). My colleagues here are prepared to talk 16 17 about that if Your Honor wants to hear it today. 18 But certainly the question is -- the reason why this 19 issue and the filing place matters, Your Honor, is the 20 plaintiffs have put in their briefing -- they have been forthcoming -- what they're seeking to do is utilize the 21 22 transferred in cases on civil suspense for each of the 23 defendants; the case filed in Michigan as to FCA, the case filed 24 in Michigan as to General Motors, cases in Virginia and New

Jersey for VW, Audi, and Georgia for Mercedes. They've taken

those cases and they've said, Your Honor, you can assert general jurisdiction as a result of those cases having been filed against each of these defendants with respect to all of the claims.

THE COURT: Because they filed a RICO claim, too.

MR. GLUECKSTEIN: They filed a RICO claim, but the RICO claim, Your Honor --

THE COURT: It can't be the only multidistrict case that has that.

MR. GLUECKSTEIN: If the RICO claim -- again, Your Honor, the premise of the defendants is that on the merits the RICO claim must be dismissed. If Your Honor were to agree with that -- I understand that the plaintiffs, you know, vehemently disagree, that they've pled a RICO claim. But if Your Honor were to agree that the defendants' motion should be granted with respect to the RICO claim, the plaintiffs are still saying that Your Honor can exercise general jurisdiction over all claims, pendent jurisdiction over the non-Florida claims and the direct filed actions against these defendants in this Court, and that's what we submit, Your Honor, is not permissible. The cases were tagged in --

THE COURT: Which judge in a multidistrict transfer case has ruled that way by dismissing a Complaint?

MR. GLUECKSTEIN: I don't have a citation, Your Honor.

I also don't know that --

1 I would be the first one to have done that. THE COURT: 2 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: I don't know that plaintiffs have 3 tried to do what has happened here, which is they've taken Your Honor's guidance with respect to Consolidated Complaints and 4 5 what they've done is filed new actions, right, before this 6 Court, and are asking this Court to exercise plenary 7 jurisdiction, general jurisdiction over each defendant with 8 respect to every claim that's in these Complaints for all We just heard Mr. Prieto say, if the RICO claim 10 stands, then Your Honor should try these cases. 11 So, Your Honor, this doesn't sound at all like a 12 typical MDL. This isn't what the MDL Panel is talking about 13 doing. What the plaintiffs now want to do is they want Your Honor to adjudicate these actions in full, in their entirety, by 14 15 exercising general jurisdiction. We submitted in our papers, Your Honor, and are prepared to talk about it if Your Honor 16 17 would like to hear about it, that if you get beyond the RICO claim -- I understand that if the RICO claim is upheld, it goes 18 19 forward. If the RICO claim goes forward --20 THE COURT: You concede that. 21 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: -- you would have specific 22 jurisdiction. 23 So the answer is, yes, you concede that. THE COURT: 24 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Yeah, if the RICO claim --

THE COURT: Okay. I got a "yeah." I'll take it.

1 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: If the RICO claim is upheld, there 2 would be specific jurisdiction. It doesn't cure this issue. Ιt 3 doesn't cure the question as to whether Your Honor could 4 exercise general plenary jurisdiction as if we were the case 5 that was actually filed in each defendant's home jurisdiction --6 THE COURT: What do you want me to do with the case 7 that was transferred? I interrupt a lot. You've got to be 8 quiet when I interrupt --9 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: No problem. 10 THE COURT: Yeah, but see, you interrupt me, too. The 11 court reporter is going crazy. Okay. 12 Now, what do you want me to do with the case that I 13 placed on civil suspense, reactivate it? MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Well, the motions that are pending 14 15 before Your Honor today for each defendant have to do with the Consolidated Complaint that we submit was improperly filed. 16 THE COURT: I know, but then what do I do with the 17 other one? 18 19 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: We believe these claims -- these 20 Complaints should be dismissed. 21 I know. What do I do with the case that THE COURT: 22 has been transferred that I placed, in order to organize it, in 23 a civil suspense file, so you wouldn't be fighting different 24 battles in different places?

MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Those cases, Your Honor, as I

1 understand it, are before Your Honor now. If Your Honor wanted 2 to activate those cases, they could be activated and we would 3 deal with those Complaints. 4 THE COURT: You want to do that. 5 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: But these Complaints --6 THE COURT: You want to do that. 7 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: If that's what's required to get 8 these Complaints dismissed, we will deal with that as the next phase. Yes, let's activate that Complaint, at least as to FCA, 10 and we will deal with that Complaint. 11 THE COURT: And for that I do have jurisdiction. 12 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: You have jurisdiction to deal with 13 that Complaint as it's filed right now. That was filed in Michigan as to FCA and transferred in here. But this 14 15 Complaint --16 How would that case proceed? THE COURT: 17 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: That case would proceed as an MDL 18 We would have pretrial proceedings on the allegations 19 that are in that Complaint and then it would go back to 20 Michigan. 21 THE COURT: Well, eventually. And how many other cases 22 do I have that are in the same category? 23 I believe, Your Honor, the way --MR. GLUECKSTEIN: 24 what the plaintiffs did here is, they filed --25 THE COURT: I'm sorry. Do you know how many other

cases? 1 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: I believe there was one filed against 2 3 each of the new defendants --4 THE COURT: Okay. 5 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: -- that was dragged in, so four or 6 five. 7 THE COURT: So I should do the same thing, if they want, on all of those cases. So what I should do is do it 8 separately. If I do it separately, I have jurisdiction, we have separate Motions to Dismiss, we have hearings. I don't need to 10 11 have you all together. I could have you separate. 12 plaintiff would have to be here all the time. That's the better way of doing it in your view, that's easier, more manageable, 13 it's the intent of the Multidistrict Panel. So we would have 14 15 six, seven Complaints with RICO claims separately. better in your view. 16 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Your Honor, you would be able to --17 18 THE COURT: Is it better? 19 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: I don't think what you're describing 20 is what would happen. We have separate Complaints now. 21 in a different Complaint than Volkswagen, Audi, different 22 Complaint than General Motors. You're administering and hearing 23 complaints on common issues amongst the various cases as you are

The issue that we have here, again, is because of the

right now. There's no reason why that couldn't be done.

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1 breadth of the Complaint that was filed directly on the docket 2 of this Court, the expanded breadth of that, and then the 3 request to Your Honor that you exercise general jurisdiction 4 over all those claims for all purposes including, potentially -it sounds like plaintiffs are going to make an argument at some 5 point potentially for trial. 6 7 THE COURT: Well, we don't have to deal with that now, 8 but it seems like it's the same thing with a lot of other multidistrict cases. 10 I don't believe, Your Honor, in those MR. GLUECKSTEIN: 11 cases they have filed directly on the docket. And, Your Honor, 12 there's a case cited by the plaintiffs --13 Do you know, Mr. Prieto, about that? THE COURT: MR. PRIETO: I think he's dead wrong, Your Honor. 14 15 THE COURT: Well, you've got to tell me why though. 16 It depends on the timing. MR. PRIETO: In every MDL, 17 before cases get centralized, cases come from every single district where they've been filed. 18 19 THE COURT: I know that. 20 Right. You understand that. MR. PRIETO: 21 argument makes no sense, you know, and --22 MR. GLUECKSTEIN: Well --23 MR. PRIETO: Let me finish. So, number one --24 I guess you're not going to settle this THE COURT: 25 one, right? I can tell. Okay. That's all right.

MR. PRIETO: So what he's asking you is to sort of unravel the Consolidated Complaint into two Complaints, Florida plaintiffs, non-Florida plaintiffs.

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. PRIETO: It makes absolutely no sense. The whole purpose for an MDL is to consolidate the claims pretrial, pretrial, of all the plaintiffs and let them bring, especially in a class action, let them bring whatever claims they believe they have sufficient facts to bring.

THE COURT: Of course, by the time we get to trial, we are going to be in trouble because you've said, I think you can try it, too, because you've got some Florida plaintiffs in a RICO case.

MR. PRIETO: But I think you -- we don't have to make that decision, Your Honor. If I know anything about this Court, is this Court likes to think ahead, but also addresses the issues before it. This issue is way, way in advance as to where these cases get tried, but let me just say this, that that proposal of splitting these two Complaints up makes absolutely no sense.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. PRIETO: Because if you were to revive the one in civil suspense, we have two choices; we're going to amend that Complaint to add the Florida plaintiffs back in, or we can basically have two identical Complaints with Florida plaintiffs

and non-Florida plaintiffs. That makes absolutely no sense.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. PRIETO: One last point: This whole concept of you inheriting the jurisdiction over a transferor court, that is Hornbook MDL law. All the cases around the country say that you, as a transferee court, inherit the jurisdiction of the transferor court. It's Hornbook.

THE COURT: All right. Well, I think I've already violated my rule by giving you more time than the Court of Appeals, and I don't want them thinking I'm getting too cocky in giving you so much time. Plus, it's close to 1:00.

Do you all eat lunch or not? You don't? Because you bill. I don't bill by the hour, so I eat lunch, so I'm going to do that. I've got to do that, I'm sorry, and give my court reporter, who's been working -- you've heard me already, you're tired of hearing that. She may leave me soon if I do that.

Did you all get that -- did that notebook ever come back without any names? Do you have it? Oh, my goodness. GM wants to talk, Honda, FCA, BMW, Audi and Nissan, and then, of course, the plaintiffs.

Can you all come back at 2:15? Is that all right? I know some of you have flights. I don't know what else to tell you. This Fairness Hearing took longer. I mean, you're here, I can try to accommodate you. There's nothing else I can do.

Your pleadings were excellent. You can rest on your -- someone

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1
   wants to be heard I can tell.
             MR. JANSMA: Yes, Your Honor, I just want to add one
2
3
    comment on behalf --
 4
             THE COURT:
                         Because you won't be back in the afternoon.
5
             MR. JANSMA: I'm trying to avoid talking this
6
    afternoon.
7
             THE COURT: Go ahead. We'll let you do that because
    you will be brief. The Multidistrict Panel gives you what, two
8
9
    minutes; is that right?
10
             MR. PRIETO: Maybe.
11
             THE COURT:
                         Maybe.
12
             MR. PRIETO: Sometimes one.
13
             THE COURT: So since they've sat in this courtroom,
14
   we'll give you that.
15
             State your name, who you represent, and what you want
    to say before you take your flight.
16
17
             MR. JANSMA: Yes, Your Honor. My name is Steve Jansma,
18
    I represent BMW AG. Excuse my voice. The cold weather kind of
19
    got me a little bit.
20
                         But you're from where?
             THE COURT:
21
             MR. JANSMA: San Antonio.
22
             THE COURT: I don't think it's that cold there.
                                                               Okay.
   Go ahead.
23
             MR. JANSMA: Your Honor, we only have the recycler
24
25
    claim left for us, and so the issues that we're applying to this
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1
    defendant -- the defendants that just argued don't really apply
2
    to us because we're saying that the direct filing, whether it's
3
    direct filed or it's not direct filed, we're challenging
4
    jurisdiction on behalf of BMW AG for both, for that Court and
5
    for this Court. So --
6
             THE COURT: Your case was transferred to me, too,
7
    right?
8
             MR. JANSMA: That's correct, Your Honor.
9
             THE COURT:
                         By the Multidistrict Panel, right?
             MR. JANSMA: That's correct.
10
11
             THE COURT:
                         You didn't object to that transfer when it
12
    was conditionally ordered to be transferred. They give you a
13
    little time to object, and you said, we're good with that.
14
             MR. JANSMA: We did not object, Your Honor.
15
             THE COURT:
                         Now you're objecting.
16
             MR. JANSMA: We're objecting to the jurisdiction
17
    under --
18
             THE COURT: You don't have the right to object on
19
    jurisdiction when they're going to send it and say, wait a
20
    second, Judge Vance and panel, you can't send it over there.
                                                                   Ιt
21
    makes no sense. They don't let you do that?
22
              MR. JANSMA: Your Honor, I believe the appropriate
23
    place for us to file the jurisdictional challenge --
24
             THE COURT:
                         Is here.
25
             MR. JANSMA: Yes, Your Honor.
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Okay. That would happen in a lot of 1 THE COURT: 2 multidistrict transfer cases, wouldn't it? 3 MR. JANSMA: Yes. 4 THE COURT: So if I rule in your favor here, I've made 5 new law that will impact the whole Multidistrict Panel system. 6 MR. JANSMA: I don't believe that that would create new 7 law. 8 THE COURT: Tell me why. 9 MR. JANSMA: I mean, the tradition in the MDL situation like this would be to file the Motion to Transfer -- excuse 10 11 me -- to challenge the jurisdiction here in your court. 12 THE COURT: And then what do I do, transfer it back? 13 MR. JANSMA: You would rule on the jurisdictional motion and if you determine that we did not have personal 14 15 jurisdiction from either the transferor court or from Your Honor, then the case would be dismissed. 16 17 Okay. And the reason I don't have personal THE COURT: 18 iurisdiction is? 19 MR. JANSMA: There are a number of reasons. I can talk 20 about RICO and I can talk about the other underlying cases, but 21 primarily the RICO one was the one that was just addressed here 22 and there's several bases for --23 THE COURT: What's the most important basis? 24 MR. JANSMA: The most important basis, Your Honor -- if 25 you'd give me just one second. I promise I'll talk quickly.

1	THE COURT: Oh, I'll give you more than one second, but
2	not much more.
3	MR. JANSMA: Your Honor, on the RICO claim they have to
4	prove a Federal statute authorizing the jurisdiction. They must
5	perfect service under the statute, and that's point one. They
6	have not perfected service under the RICO claim and Your Honor
7	had
8	THE COURT: And the reason in your case is because you
9	are representing BMW from where?
10	MR. JANSMA: Germany, Your Honor.
11	THE COURT: Okay. What do you want to say about that?
12	That's kind of an issue, isn't it?
13	MR. PRIETO: Well, we had this issue litigated
14	before
15	THE COURT: I know.
16	MR. PRIETO: and we're a little confused because the
17	Special Master, Ryan Stumphauzer, ruled that
18	THE COURT: Recommended.
19	MR. PRIETO: Recommended, I'm sorry.
20	THE COURT: He doesn't have all the friends that I
21	have.
22	MR. PRIETO: Recommended that BMW AG be acceptable to
23	service alternatively under 4(k)(2) of the rules.
24	THE COURT: And what happened?
25	MR. PRIETO: And I think either Your Honor approved

1 that or --2 THE COURT: And you weren't the lawyer for BMW then? 3 MR. JANSMA: Yes, Your Honor, I was the lawyer for BMW 4 then, but still that was not service under the provisions of the 5 RICO Act. 6 As Your Honor said in this General Cigar case, service 7 has to come through that Act, not through the Hague. And that's 8 what they tried to do here, is the Hague, and that's 205 F.Supp. I can give you the quote from Your Honor if you'd like. 1335. People use my words against me 10 THE COURT: Go ahead. 11 all the time. 12 You were actually quoting from another MR. JANSMA: 13 case, the Doe versus --14 THE COURT: That's even worse. 15 MR. JANSMA: -- Unocal: 16 "It would be inappropriate for a Federal Court to 17 effectively extend the territorial reach of a Federal 18 statute by applying a national context test for personal 19 jurisdiction where service is not affected pursuant to the 20 Federal statute, meaning RICO. 21 In fact, that's exactly what happened in the Doe versus 22 Unocal case, is that they tried to serve under the Hague instead

Point number two is as equally a big point, that in order to establish the initial pleading jurisdiction to carry

of serving under RICO. So that is point number one, Your Honor.

23

24

1 the prima facie case, they have to plead nationwide 2 jurisdiction, which they did not do in this case, and I'm 3 talking about the recyclers here. And since they didn't meet their pleading burden, then it never shifted to BMW AG to 4 5 establish any kind of national jurisdiction. However, Your 6 Honor, in this case we went -- we were the only defendant to do 7 this, but we went --8 You're the only one who filed an affidavit. THE COURT: 9 MR. JANSMA: That's right. 10 See, I know, that's why. THE COURT: 11 MR. JANSMA: Right. And then finally --12 THE COURT: What about that, Mr. Prieto, the only one 13 to file an affidavit? MR. PRIETO: They're the only ones who filed an 14 15 affidavit, Your Honor, but I am still at a loss because we did serve BMW AG in the prior case, not the recycler case, but that 16 17 They either agreed or this Court granted our motion and case. 18 we may have actually agreed or settled the case before the Court 19 ruled, but they had --20 You settled that case. THE COURT: 21 MR. PRIETO: That case, the economic loss. 22 Well, why don't you go out to lunch and THE COURT: 23 maybe you can settle this one? 24 MR. PRIETO: We'd love to do that. 25 THE COURT: Just with BMW AG.

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             MR. PRIETO:
                          But I think that doesn't -- I don't
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    believe that that resolves the issue of personal jurisdiction.
3
                         It does. If you settle it, it does.
             THE COURT:
 4
             MR. PRIETO: Well, of course, but I think we also have
5
    two other arguments on why we have personal jurisdiction as to
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    BMW AG, the German company.
7
             THE COURT: What is that, without service?
8
             MR. PRIETO:
                          Number one, that we have specific
9
    jurisdiction because we served -- I am at a loss as to --
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             THE COURT: You know why? Because you haven't eaten
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    lunch. You know, I know you want to go to San Antonio, it's a
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    great city, great district. It's in the same district as
    Austin; is that right?
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14
             MR. JANSMA: No, Your Honor.
15
             THE COURT: Oh, it's a different district.
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             MR. JANSMA: It's a different district.
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             THE COURT: I always get that confused. Okay.
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             MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, I just remembered --
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             THE COURT:
                         I'm not going to rule from the bench.
20
    You've done it in writing.
21
             MR. JANSMA: We've done it in writing, yes, Your Honor.
22
    Thank you.
23
             THE COURT: You wanted to make that point.
24
             MR. JANSMA: That's it.
25
             THE COURT: I had the point before, see, on the
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affidavit, so I got it. It is a unique circumstance. 1 2 MR. PRIETO: No, it is, and they were the only -- BMW 3 AG, to their credit or discredit, depending on how you look at it, were the only foreign defendant that did not waive service. 4 5 They only waived service after the Special Master recommended. 6 We tried the Hague and the German authority said, we don't do 7 service under the Hague for these kinds of claims. So then we 8 tried alternative service. The Special Master --9 THE COURT: So what are you going to do now? 10 MR. PRIETO: If he's right -- you know, I think we have 11 jurisdiction or --12 THE COURT: Why don't you talk? When is your flight? 13 MR. JANSMA: Midafternoon, Judge. THE COURT: Okay. Go and talk, and then file 14 15 something. 16 Right. Well, I think --MR. PRIETO: 17 THE COURT: What do you want me to do? 18 MR. PRIETO: No, no, I think the only point I want to 19 make is, we have alleged that we have personal jurisdiction over 20 all the defendants, including the foreign ones, under Florida's Long Arm Statute. We've made that argument in our pleadings. 21 22 To the extent that there's an issue that hasn't been 23 briefed, we would like the ability to brief that particular issue. To be frank, we were not focused on the recyclers at 24 this hearing. 25

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             THE COURT: Fair enough.
             MR. PRIETO: We were focused on the other issues.
2
 3
             THE COURT: Fair enough. I'll give you time. I won't
4
    rule until you've had a chance to file something else.
5
             All of these people who signed up, do you want to come
6
    back in the afternoon, or you don't, or you do?
7
             MR. MALLOW: Yes, Your Honor.
8
             THE COURT: You do?
9
             MR. MALLOW: I'm sorry.
10
             THE COURT: No, no. That's all right. The court
    reporter is sorry more than I am.
11
12
             Give me a little bit more time. How about 2:45?
                                                               No.
13
    It's 1:10. Is that all right? You've said your piece
14
    already --
15
             MR. BIANCHI: I'm done.
16
             THE COURT: -- for Mr. Cantero, so you don't have to
    come back.
17
             I'm not going to rule from the bench. I've got your
18
19
    pleadings. This is only if you want to add something in oral
20
    argument, you're free to do so, and at 2:45 I'll let you. Okay?
21
    Thank you. Have a good lunch.
22
             MR. BIANCHI: Thank you.
             THE COURT SECURITY OFFICER: All rise
23
24
        (There was a luncheon recess taken at 1:10 p.m.)
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AFTERNOON SESSION

(The following proceedings were held at 3:08 p.m.)

THE COURT: I'm sorry, folks, it took a little longer.

I had a visit from Judge Conrad from North Carolina who sits

with me on the Executive Committee and he wanted to see the

courthouse. It's a nice courthouse, he said.

So let's see. In order to accommodate some people, if anybody is going to take a flight or needs to go, if there's someone like that and you're not fighting among yourselves and you need that and you want to go first, I have no problems with that.

Okay. That means whoever needed to go, left already. So they took care of that which is fine with me.

Do we need to do anything else on the -- we have exhausted, I think, the direct file issues, it seems to me, orally, unless someone else wants to say something about the personal jurisdiction arguments who hasn't been heard. Okay.

Does anybody for General Motors want to say something on the Motion to Stay, why I should change what I've done before in order to let the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration proceed at the rapid pace that all Federal agencies proceed in protecting us?

MS. SMITH: Good afternoon, Your Honor.

THE COURT: I'm going to tell you where I'm coming

25 | from.

1 Okay. I'm sorry. Go ahead. Tell us who you are and 2 who you represent. 3 I'm Renee Smith and I represent General MS. SMITH: Motors, and I would like to just briefly address the stay issues 4 5 which I know have been thoroughly briefed before you. 6 THE COURT: You've waited long enough, you're entitled 7 to say something. 8 MS. SMITH: Thank you. 9 THE COURT: What do you think I should do? Do nothing for how long? 10 11 Well, we believe you should do nothing for MS. SMITH: 12 at least six months --13 Oh, my goodness gracious. THE COURT: 14 MS. SMITH: -- which is absolutely consistent with what 15 other Courts have felt are appropriate stays. In this case, this is a case --16 17 THE COURT: In what type of cases? In other cases where Courts exercise 18 MS. SMITH: 19 judicial discretion to have stays, Courts have -- I think 20 there's an Ortega case from the Eleventh Circuit -- and Courts 21 will revisit issues every six months. 22 In this case in particular --23 I may not be around every six months. THE COURT: 24 I'm optimistic you will be. I hope GM will MS. SMITH: 25 not be in this case in six months. I think that is the issue --

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THE COURT: I hope GM is still around in six months, too. MS. SMITH: We certainly hope GM is still around in six months as well, but we don't think GM should be in this case, and that is the precise issue that these petitions raise. The question Your Honor raised is: Why is this different than the stay you already ruled on in September 2015, three years ago? And three years is a really important point. I think when Mr. Prieto was discussing in a jurisdictional context a hearing that happened long ago when he said, we are going to bring in GM and Chrysler back into this case, we looked to see when that hearing was. That hearing was in November -- I want to make sure I've got the right time here. THE COURT: You make me feel really bad. MS. SMITH: It was November 2016. At that hearing Mr. Prieto said: I think we're going to make a decision on whether to bring GM and Chrysler into that case in 30 days, and this is Docket Number 1310, Page 20. And the Court, going through the issues of whether to be on the same Complaint or a different Complaint said, why delay everybody?

You gave this very nice analogy and I know you don't want your words brought back against you, but I actually thought it was a very --

THE COURT: That happens when you talk too much.

MS. SMITH: I thought it was a very good point, which

1 is you said -- you gave the analogy where there's a wedding 2 bus, and you said, "You take a bus to a wedding, there's an 3 early bus that people take when they go home early and then 4 GM is on the second bus." And you asked Mr. Prieto, "What's 5 wrong with that?" And Mr. Prieto said, "Nothing is wrong 6 with that. We agree." 7 That was November 2016. They didn't get this next bus even geared up until March 2018. 8 9 THE COURT: It's a long wedding I guess. It was a really, really --10 MS. SMITH: 11 THE COURT: One of those Indian weddings. 12 MS. SMITH: Exactly. So the question here is: Why are 13 plaintiffs fighting this stay, it's a modest stay, to let NHTSA 14 do its job and exercise expertise? 15 When did they start doing their job? THE COURT: So GM first --16 MS. SMITH: 17 It seems like you got two years already. THE COURT: 18 MS. SMITH: Exactly. So GM first filed the Petition 19 for Inconsequentiality in November 2016. So NHTSA had gotten on 20 the bus and has been working on this since --21 THE COURT: For two years. So you got two years. 22 For two years, exactly, for two years, and MS. SMITH: 23 they've done a lot in two years. 24 First of all, what they did that is unprecedented in 25

this litigation is they granted -- they took the extraordinary

1 step of considering GM's petitions for determination that any of 2 these airbags are inconsequential to motor vehicle safety, and 3 they exempted GM from recall repairs and remedy obligations. 4 Why did they do that? 5 They did that based on GM's scientific evidence that 6 they found could ultimately grow and develop to support GM's 7 position with respect to the long-term safety of the covered 8 inflators. 9 That issue NHTSA has been working on for two years, 10 but --11 THE COURT: So you're going to win this case. 12 MS. SMITH: We are going to win this case. We are 13 absolutely going to win this --14 Why do you want to postpone your victory? THE COURT: 15 MS. SMITH: Because how NHTSA rules -- regardless of how NHTSA rules will frame the issues in this case. 16 Neither GM 17 nor plaintiffs are going to be able to frame where they stand on the merits of this case. 18 19 THE COURT: Why not? Why can't you do it independent 20 of what the Government does? 21 MR. SMITH: Because while these petitions are pending, 22 however these petitions come out -- if the petitions come out in 23 new GM's favor, which we absolutely believe they will --24 THE COURT: All right. 25 MS. SMITH: -- and they should, this case should be

over. This is going to be directly contrary, at least as to GM --

THE COURT: You mean on a summary judgment.

MS. SMITH: At a summary judgment, or we believe plaintiffs won't pursue this case.

THE COURT: Well, you never know that. That's persuasive, but the problem with staying it -- because it makes sense, if the Government is already that far ahead, then we can have discovery.

See, the problem with the six-month automatic stay, which is really what you're asking for, is that, number one, maybe the Government agency won't be done with whatever they're doing, and it may be a reasonable thing for them not to be finished with whatever they're doing. But if they come out against you, then you're six months behind in any event.

If they come out in favor of you, your opponents are going to say, well, we need discovery because we can act independent of what the Government bureaucracy said. So I've got to give you discovery and that means you've got to do things six months from now. How does that help your client?

MS. SMITH: Well, it helps our client because -- first of all, plaintiffs are not going to be six months behind. Even if they were going to be six months behind, where is the prejudice when plaintiffs have just unilaterally decided after a year and a half to bring the case?

1 THE COURT: Okay. GM has already agreed to give plaintiffs 2 MS. SMITH: 3 discovery on what plaintiffs have prioritized, which are 4 productions to NHTSA. 5 THE COURT: So if I stay it, discovery proceeds. 6 MS. SMITH: Absolutely not. We have given --7 THE COURT: Okay. 8 MS. SMITH: We have agreed --It's a weird stay, but I'm willing to do 9 THE COURT: that kind of a stay, a fakey stay. 10 11 Right, exactly. Plaintiffs already have MS. SMITH: 12 from GM -- we agreed, even though we have filed this Motion to 13 Stay, to give what plaintiffs prioritized, which were certain of our productions to NHTSA. 14 15 THE COURT: You have done that already. MS. SMITH: 16 We have done that already. It's still in 17 progress, but they've got at least 20,000 documents, 400,000 18 pages, and of course, plaintiffs have millions of pages of 19 documents from the prior productions in this case. They have 20 plenty to do over six months. To have GM incur the cost of 21 going through discovery to have yet another set of lawyers at this table when we believe --22 23 I don't think you need another set, you're THE COURT: 24 fine.

MS. SMITH: I'm not as exciting as some of these other

1 lawyers so --2 THE COURT: I think you're fine. 3 There's not a prejudice to the plaintiffs, MS. SMITH: 4 but there is a great benefit to waiting here. What NHTSA does, 5 regardless of however they rule, regardless of how they do it, 6 will help frame the issues; whether plaintiffs want to try this 7 case, whether they want to proceed with it. The Court, the parties, GM should not waste their resources on this when what 8 NHTSA does is drastically going to frame this case going forward 10 one way or another. THE COURT: What do I do with General Motors' other 11 12 arguments? 13 You don't have other arguments or motions? 14 MS. SMITH: Of course, we have other arguments and --15 THE COURT: I should deny those and grant the stay. 16 MS. SMITH: No. 17 THE COURT: So that way we are kind of ahead. We give 18 you the six months, you do other discovery, and we are ready to 19 qo. 20 MS. SMITH: I think this Court can use its inherent 21 authority to control its docket and in the interest of 22 justice --23 I'm not sure I can, but I'll try. THE COURT: 24 -- if it has a basis to dismiss GM, which MS. SMITH: 25 we believe we have several meritorious bases to dismiss GM, the

1 Court should go ahead and rule on that because it is unclear 2 when there will be rulings. In the meantime, we request this 3 Court grant a modest stay to let NHTSA finish doing its job. 4 Just one other point. I know they have been doing it 5 for two years. The fact is the process is nearing its end. 6 GM's submissions are substantially complete, the comment period 7 is over. 8 This is not in the same procedural posture with NHTSA that it was two years ago. This is not the time where we shouldn't wait an additional six months when we're on the cusp 10 11 of getting something from NHTSA that will help frame the issues 12 in this case. 13 THE COURT: You have to help me out. Okay? I love these words though, but you're going to help me, Petitions for 14 15 Inconsequentiality. I mean, it seems like we do a lot of that in court --16 MS. SMITH: Or a lot of inconsequential petitions. 17 18 THE COURT: -- but I'm not sure we're talking about the 19 same thing. All right? 20 MS. SMITH: 21 THE COURT: Your opponents say, listen, that's not 22 really helpful, it's not relevant, it doesn't have anything to 23 do -- it's not going to help you decide whether these vehicles

MS. SMITH: I say that is absolutely wrong. To say

have defective airbags. What do you say to that?

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    that it is irrelevant whether NHTSA determines -- it's not just
   whether there's a defect --
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             THE COURT: Well, I said, not helpful first, but the
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   words were relevant.
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             MS. SMITH: Yes, exactly. I think plaintiffs do use in
6
    one of their headings -- they say it's irrelevant, which, to me,
7
   was particularly striking when one of plaintiffs' main theories
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    is that ammonium nitrate inflators have a uniform defect.
    argued, in response to our motion -- it's Docket 3032 at 4 --
    that NHTSA determined that the airbags are defective and
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    dangerous regardless of architecture, humidity, exposure, or
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    other factors. If the NHTSA rules in GM's favor on these
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    petitions --
             THE COURT: Now, we are talking about eight vehicles,
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15
    right?
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             MS. SMITH:
                         I'm sorry?
                         How many vehicles on the petition?
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             THE COURT:
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             MS. SMITH:
                         The petitions are specific, address a
19
    specific platform of vehicles called GMT900 ---
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             THE COURT:
                         And how many?
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                         Potentially millions.
             MS. SMITH:
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             THE COURT:
                         No, no, but the petitions don't have --
23
    there are eight recall numbers, right?
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             MS. SMITH: Yes.
                               They're staggered, like they are for
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    the coordinated remedy, so as NHTSA will do the defect
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1 information report, then GM would do a Petition for Inconsequentiality on those recalls. That's why we have three 2 3 petitions. THE COURT: So a recall number has thousands of 4 5 vehicles. 6 MS. SMITH: Depending, exactly. 7 The plaintiffs say we're talking about THE COURT: 700,000 cars, right? So the recall with the seven or eight --8 9 eight numbers, I'm sorry, cover hundreds of thousands of cars? Right. The recalls at issue that are 10 MS. SMITH: 11 subject to these petitions are and will be in the millions as 12 the stagger goes. The 700,000 number is, there were a few 13 hundred thousand that --14 THE COURT: That may even be worse for you if we wait, 15 it could get expanded. 16 MS. SMITH: How both sides perceive a case that either involves a few hundred thousand versus several million vehicles, 17 after everything we heard this morning, is going to be another 18 19 significant issue that will help be framed by these petitions. 20 THE COURT: Tell me -- you know, they waited a long 21 time to file these Complaints, but the petitions have been 22 pending for kind of the same amount of time, two years, right? 23 MS. SMITH: Yes, but they've actually been progressing. THE COURT: How do they progress? Tell me how that 24

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works.

1 MS. SMITH: So GM had monthly meetings, monthly updates with NHTSA, has done extensive submissions to NHTSA. 2 That 3 process is now essentially complete. 4 THE COURT: How long does it take normally? 5 MS. SMITH: I actually don't know if there has ever 6 been a process similar to this, but what I will tell you is the 7 comment period has closed on the most recent petition and that, 8 as plaintiffs state in their brief, new GM submissions on the petition are complete. This happened in July 2018. We are not where we were two years ago, unlike plaintiffs who chose -- and 10 11 I understand that there are a lot of competing issues going on 12 in this case. This is not to be critical of plaintiffs for not 13 bringing in GM sooner. THE COURT: Well, no. Your client may say, hey, you 14 complained that they didn't sue us sooner. 15 16 Exactly, and then I would be in big MS. SMITH: 17 trouble. So what we're saying is: What is the rush? NHTSA is 18 on the cusp and has everything before it --19 THE COURT: If I do it with you -- you're the only one 20 who has petitions. 21 MS. SMITH: Correct. What does that do to the other automakers? 22 THE COURT: 23 MS. SMITH: The other automakers will either proceed or 24 not proceed, depending on how the Court rules on the Motions to

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Dismiss.

1 THE COURT: Obviously, but they don't want a stay. 2 You're the only one who wants a stay. 3 MS. SMITH: We are the only ones in this unique situation. This is unprecedented that NHTSA has done this. 4 5 This is unprecedented. It's directly contrary to --6 THE COURT: And the reason they've done it with you is 7 because you've asked them to. 8 MS. SMITH: No. Other plaintiffs -- excuse me, other OEMs have also requested NHTSA to do it. Plaintiffs refer to 10 this in their response. They refer to requests by Mazda and 11 Ford, both of which were roundly rejected by NHTSA. This is an 12 extraordinary situation where NHTSA has found, based on robust 13 evidence, there's a real issue here and this real issue would impact every facet of this litigation. 14 15 THE COURT: All right. "All right" means I hear you. 16 Who wants to say something against a six-month stay? The way we're proceeding, we kind of do that anyway without 17 granting it, and it's my fault. Who do we have? 18 19 MR. MINER: Curtis Miner for the plaintiffs, Your 20 Honor, and I'll respond to GM's argument for a stay. 21 Just picking up on your last point, actually, in 22 effect, their motion, this Motion to Stay was filed on August 23 In a way they have had a quasi stay for three and a half 20th. 24 months now.

THE COURT: That's my fault. So I should give them

1 credit time served? No? 2 In that three and half months NHTSA has not MR. MINER: 3 ruled on the petitions. 4 THE COURT: What are you going to do? Are you going to 5 be deposing? What are you actually going to do? They say it 6 costs money and time, lay off for six months, you've got enough 7 work to do with the other automakers. The judge isn't going to rule on these Motions to Dismiss for a little bit anyway because 8 he is trying all these cases, some big, some little. What's the big deal? 10 11 MR. MINER: We're going to pursue discovery. We are 12 going to start taking depositions. And also, if the other --13 THE COURT: Of whom, General Motors people? MR. MINER: We'll start on all of this round of 14 15 automaker defendants. 16 THE COURT: Why don't you do all the others and put General Motors at the end? 17 18 MR. MINER: Then you are going to have a two-track 19 system. 20 THE COURT: It's not two tracks. 21 MR. MINER: If this is the last bus leaving the 22 wedding --23 THE COURT: Someone is in the caboose, you know, of the 24 train. 25 MR. MINER: What GM really is asking for is not to be

1 on the last bus leaving the wedding, but for someone to call 2 them a custom ride the next morning on a different time table. 3 THE COURT: Some people sometimes have two wedding 4 lists, right, the first one, and then, depending on how many 5 people RSVP, the second one. 6 MR. MINER: Here are two reasons it just doesn't make 7 sense to put it off even for a short amount of time. 8 you were citing the 700,000 car figure. What that is is the number of GM cars that aren't even affected by these Petitions for Inconsequentiality. These are GM cars --10 11 THE COURT: Well, how do I know that? The eight recall 12 numbers are totally different from the 700,000 cars? 13 MR. MINER: The cars that are subject to the Petitions for Inconsequentiality is a much larger number, but there is a 14 15 significant number of cars that aren't even subject to it, that are under recall regardless. 16 17 THE COURT: Who are part of this case. 18 MR. MINER: Pardon? 19 THE COURT: Who are part of this case. 20 MR. MINER: That are part of this case. 21 Now, GM quibbles with our number. They say it's more 22 like half a million. We have a figure more like three-quarters 23 Either way you cut it, it's a lot of cars. of a million.

THE COURT: Should I separate the recall number cars?

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Does that make sense?

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MR. MINER: That would make no sense at all. you're getting into multiple tracks and multiple inefficiencies. Imagine if discovery proceeded against the cars that are --THE COURT: It would actually be shorter and less Heaven forbid that discovery be that way. MR. MINER: But then, when you get to the discovery against the GMT900 platform vehicles, you could end up deposing engineers twice, you could depose an engineer once, and that's not efficient. THE COURT: But that would inure to the detriment of General Motors. MR. MINER: I think it inures to everyone's detriment. We want to do the case efficiently, too. We don't want to depose people twice. There's another reason. I think you were also starting to hit on this. NHTSA is going to do something. Who knows when they're going to do it. The petitions have been pending --THE COURT: Do you? Do you know how that works? MR. MINER: We know what the process is. We have no

MR. MINER: We know what the process is. We have no idea when they'll rule. The petitions were filed in November of 2016, November 15th of 2016, so we're at two years and a month now. We don't know when they will rule, we don't know how they will rule, and they could find in a whole number of different ways. We think the petitions should be rejected and, in fact, these petitions have been hotly contested. You know, the Center

for Automotive Research has put a filing into the NHTSA docket saying that this is just an effort at delay.

THE COURT: What's the impact if they rule in favor of General Motors? What does that mean?

MR. MINER: And they could rule in a whole number of different ways.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. MINER: They could grant them partly. Who knows? It's very difficult to predict, but it doesn't put an end to plaintiffs' claims. It's not collateral estoppel or res judicata here.

The plaintiffs have claims ranging from state consumer deception and trade practices act statutes, state common law claims, RICO claims. An administrative ruling by NHTSA and whether it's going to impose the recall or modify the recall for these GM vehicles isn't going to affect those claims.

GM, at some point, may want to give the information that NHTSA decides in ruling on the petitions to its expert. I could see it coming into expert discovery, but whatever they rule at some point, they're going to be able to use it in the case, in this case, but whatever NHTSA rules is not going to put a hard stop on plaintiffs' case. Plaintiffs' case is still going to proceed, not just involving these half a million or 700,000 unaffected vehicles, vehicles that aren't part of the petition, but our case will proceed even against the vehicles

that are built on the GMT900 platform. So there really just is no efficiency in putting it off in any way.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. MINER: It really sort of frames the debate and, you know, GM's arguments all go to why it would be nice for GM if there was a stay and why it might be more efficient, but under the primary jurisdiction doctrine, that's really not what we look at. The primary jurisdiction doctrine -- and you know it well, Your Honor, from the first opinion that you wrote -- it looks at whether the claims are outside the conventional competence of the Courts. GM doesn't even touch that argument because obviously these are claims that are well within the competence of the Courts. You've been hearing them all morning and afternoon, you've been hearing them for three years.

The second thing the Court is supposed to look at under primary jurisdiction is whether proceeding in this case will unduly interfere with NHTSA's administrative process. Well, we have been proceeding in this case --

THE COURT: We're not interfering.

MR. MINER: We're not interfering. NHTSA has never said a word. In fact, what we're doing is buttressing the NHTSA process, as you heard from Mr. Juneau.

THE COURT: What is the process? Is it a body of individuals, or how does that work?

MR. MINER: The internal workings of NHTSA, how they

1 will actually or how they rule on the petitions, I don't know 2 the answer to that. 3 Okay. All right. THE COURT: 4 MR. MINER: And however they do, it's not collateral 5 estoppel, it's not res judicata in this case. They don't have 6 the benefit of a lot of things that we have. 7 THE COURT: They won't convince you to drop this case. 8 MR. MINER: Not today. 9 THE COURT: That one I figured. 10 You're going to tell me who does the rulings? 11 MS. SMITH: For NHTSA? 12 THE COURT: Yeah. How does that work? A jury of 13 experts, right? That is exactly the point. I'm not exactly 14 MS. SMITH: 15 sure the precise person, but what it is, it's people with a 16 specialized expertise in this area which have been looking at 17 this for two years. 18 THE COURT: Can I give them an Allen Charge or not? 19 MS. SMITH: I cannot comment on that. But just one 20 quick point, which is, there is not a requirement either under primary jurisdiction or the Court's inherent discretion to stay 21 22 a case, that it be dispositive of an issue. Setting aside 23 primary jurisdiction, the factors are prejudice to the nonmoving 24 party, there is none; whether the stay would simplify and

clarify the issues, clearly it would do so in this case.

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1 doesn't have to dispose of the issues. 2 THE COURT: All right. I'll give you that. 3 And it will reduce the burdens on the MS. SMITH: There is no reason to rush to proceeding. 4 5 THE COURT: Don't worry about the Court. We are going 6 to get five judges before two years, so we'll be okay. 7 But how does it hurt you? That means you're going to 8 have depositions if you lose, or even if you win, before the administrative agency. That means some people may get deposed 10 twice. 11 MS. SMITH: We have requested a stay of the case against GM, period. 12 13 THE COURT: Totally. Totally, because even though there may be 14 MS. SMITH: 15 some, some claims, there's only, I think, one out of 32 named plaintiffs for GM that does not have one of the GMT900 vehicles 16 subject to the petitions, or that will be subject to the 17 18 petitions. So here, even if there may incidentally be some 19 issues that aren't quite covered by the petitions, for judicial 20 economy, for managing the docket, the whole case should be stayed. There should not be two depositions of deponents. 21 22 THE COURT: So if I stay it for six months from today, 23 at the end of June you'll say, we're ready to go. 24 MS. SMITH: I think we will see as the way --

THE COURT: No matter what happens.

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What I will say is --1 MS. SMITH: 2 THE COURT: You'll be ready to go, they can set up 3 depositions and put you on the fast train, right? 4 MS. SMITH: No. Let me just say, first of all, I don't 5 want to give short shrift to our dismissal arguments --6 THE COURT: I understand. 7 MS. SMITH: -- which I think the Court should do, but 8 second of all, the way we have requested is that the Court make 9 a stay for six months. That stay will expire in six months. 10 THE COURT: Oh, then you come back and get an 11 extension. 12 MS. SMITH: We can see where we are. Depending on what 13 has happened, we may ask you to extend it. You may deny it. But I can't say where we're going to be six months from now, but 14 15 I do know there's no reason that we cannot wait for those six months to see how this critical issue turns out. 16 17 THE COURT: All right. I understand. 18 MS. SMITH: Thank you very much, Your Honor. 19 THE COURT: No problem. Thank you. 20 Anybody else for General Motors who wants All right. 21 to talk about RICO and the Takata guilty plea? 22 MR. FELLER: Good afternoon, Your Honor. I am Lenny 23 Feller, I am the second set of GM lawyers after Ms. Smith. 24 Your Honor, so the basic question is -- and I think 25 you've asked it in a couple of different contexts today -- which is, three years ago you denied a Motion to Dismiss by Takata and by Honda of plaintiffs' RICO claim. And plaintiffs come to you and say, Your Honor, this is done, this is decided, this is over. You already dealt with this. And I think there are two very simple and very straightforward reasons why that's not true and why this RICO claim against these four defendants has to be dismissed.

THE COURT: Against which defendants?

MR. FELLER: Against the four consumers --

THE COURT: All of them.

The four consumer defendants; General MR. FELLER: Motors, Volkswagen, FCA, and Mercedes.

> THE COURT: Okay.

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MR. FELLER: Your Honor, number one, really important, the prior RICO counts were only against Takata, which we'll get to the guilty plea in a second, but we agree, pled guilty, is the bad guy; and Honda and that's it. Against the other six, what we call legacy OEMs, the original OEM defendants, Toyota, Nissan, Mazda, BMW, Subaru, there was no RICO count in those Complaints, or Ford. Ford, right before they pled guilty in April of 2018, was amended to add RICO, but at the time of your Motion to Dismiss it was only --

THE COURT: My order. I haven't done motions in a long time.

MR. FELLER: I'm sorry, your Motion to Dismiss Order.

I apologize, Your Honor.

THE COURT: No problem.

MR. FELLER: It was only Takata and it was only Honda, Your Honor, and those allegations against -- again, allegations against those two defendants about evidence being destroyed, about secret joint testing between those two defendants, about those two defendants -- Honda is the OEM, misleading regulators. There is nothing remotely like that in these Complaints against these four defendants. And so RICO -- and Ms. Han is going to come up after me for Volkswagen and talk about some of the specific elements or at some point on your piece of paper --

THE COURT: It doesn't have to be in order.

MR. FELLER: -- about the specific elements, Your

Honor, but the point is that the allegations in these Complaints

against these four new defendants three years later --

THE COURT: I agree with you that there's a difference obviously.

MR. FELLER: Okay.

THE COURT: But the issue still remains that it's -why is it so difficult for judges to grant Motions to Dismiss?
We're always reluctant to do that, less so probably in Federal
Court, but we're always reluctant because we want to know more
about the case, and a Motion for Summary Judgment, if it's
granted, is a stronger order. And when you go up on appeal as a
defendant, you're better off, are you not, with a summary

1 judgment in your favor than with an order of dismissal that 2 someone may say is premature? 3 MR. FELLER: And, Your Honor, I think my second point 4 is the reason why it should be, I think, pretty easy to grant a 5 Motion to Dismiss -- and, again, I'm here to talk about RICO, 6 all right, not some other count. RICO, the racketeering --7 THE COURT: So grant it on RICO and leave the others. 8 MR. FELLER: Well, I don't know that we're here today 9 to argue about everything. Right? We have an agenda, you know, 10 some of it --11 Okay. Fair enough. THE COURT: 12 MR. FELLER: You know, jurisdiction covers everything, 13 but RICO was one of the topics we got to talk about and I think we can deal with the other stuff. 14 15 THE COURT: All right. MR. FELLER: Your Honor, the reason this should be an 16 17 easy grant of the Motion to Dismiss is the Plea Agreement; and I 18 am hoping, after Mr. Prieto's comments this morning quoting from 19 different documents in the Takata case, we're past whether or 20 not this Court can consider the Plea Agreement or consider the 21 substance. 22 THE COURT: Well, I think I can consider the Plea 23 Agreement. The issue is: Is it sufficiently detailed? I mean,

it's sufficiently detailed -- I don't mean to say the judge

didn't have enough to accept a quilty plea. Is it sufficiently

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detailed to decide that General Motors is an absolute total innocent victim, so much that the case should be dismissed without an opportunity for discovery? That's really the issue. MR. FELLER: And so I think the -- I think that's right and so I want to take the Court in my five minutes through --THE COURT: You can have more if you want. MR. FELLER: -- through the Plea Agreement and establish that. THE COURT: Okay. But also, I think, the question is, as MR. FELLER: framed under Igbal and Twombly and really under 9(b), are plaintiffs' allegations plausible as pled in light of the Plea Agreement? THE COURT: Do you think it has changed that much after Twombly? I wonder what the statistics are. You probably don't know. MR. FELLER: Your Honor, I don't know the statistics. I do think it clarified the standard, and I think, again, in this case on this Plea Agreement, it makes it simple. So I did hand up some documents to your clerk. I don't know if that's --THE COURT: Yeah, I've got them. MR. FELLER: So very quickly --THE COURT: Your opponent has them as well, right? MR. FELLER: Of course, of course. And, Your Honor, again, in the briefing there's some

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    back and forth about the Plea Agreement and it being considered.
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    It's not just the Plea Agreement. So the first document is the
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    Restitution Order, and if you go to Page 2, paragraph 1, about
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    seven or eight lines down, it references and incorporates the
    Plea Agreement, and I want to address what Mr. Prieto said this
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    morning about the restitution and --
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                         Where does it talk about General Motors?
             THE COURT:
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             MR. FELLER: Your Honor, General Motors --
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             THE COURT:
                         I kept on looking.
                                             I looked through it.
                          So that's going to be the third document
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             MR. FELLER:
    and you'll see General Motors as well as the four --
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             THE COURT:
                         C?
                          No.
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             MR. FELLER:
                               So that's the Plea Agreement.
    this one, it's Exhibit 2, it's only a couple of pages.
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             THE COURT:
                         Okay.
             MR. FELLER: It's Docket Number 30982 [sic] in this
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    case.
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             THE COURT: Well, I'm looking at your package. Three
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   what?
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                          30982 is the docket number.
             MR. FELLER:
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    third document, I think, in your packet. It's the first page,
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    says Exhibit 2.
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             THE COURT: You've got them in different order here
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    so -- Exhibit 2, that's what you want me to look at?
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             MR. FELLER: I want you to look at Exhibit 2, and I
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1 want you to look at the third page of it. The Allocation Schedule. 2 THE COURT: 3 MR. FELLER: Correct. 4 THE COURT: Okay. 5 And the Restitution Fund Distribution MR. FELLER: 6 Amounts and it's conveniently in alphabetical order and so you 7 will see all four of the new consumer defendants on there; FCA, General Motors, Mercedes-Benz, and at the bottom Volkswagen. 8 9 THE COURT: Okay. MR. FELLER: And so, Your Honor, Mr. Prieto --10 11 THE COURT: I don't think there's any dispute they got 12 a lot of money. 13 MR. FELLER: Well, they didn't just get a lot of money, Your Honor, they got a lot of money as restitution pursuant to a 14 15 Plea Agreement. Okay? So you asked: Where do we have General That's where we have General Motors. 16 Motors? 17 THE COURT: All right. 18 MR. FELLER: And then again, Your Honor, if you can go 19 to the big one marked Exhibit C. 20 All right. THE COURT: 21 MR. FELLER: You know, we spent a lot of time talking 22 about, oh, the Plea Agreement, and I think how plaintiffs tried 23 to make the case, and you may have mentioned it this morning, 24 was, well, this is some sort of unilateral statement by Takata. 25 Your Honor, that's not what this is, and you know because we

1 were here before the Ford Fairness Hearing for a sentencing. Plea Agreement isn't a unilateral statement by a defendant. 2 3 is an agreement with the United States Government, ultimately a 4 finding accepted by a Court, in this case Judge Steeh in the 5 Eastern District of Michigan. 6 So, Your Honor, very quickly just to go through this, 7 on Page 2, count of conviction, what is Takata convicted of? 8 Wire fraud. Okay. Why is that important? Because it's the same predicate act that plaintiffs allege these OEMs are liable for under RICO. 10 11 Your Honor, if you could go to Page 7. 12 THE COURT: So the bottom line is: You say you can't 13 be a victim and a co-conspirator at the same time. 14 MR. FELLER: I think --15 THE COURT: Right? 16 MR. FELLER: Your Honor, I think to get to that 17 conclusion, to get to that conclusion --18 THE COURT: Because if there's a case that says you 19 can, then I should deny the Motion to Dismiss. 20 MR. FELLER: Your Honor, this is --21 THE COURT: I don't have a case right here. 22 MR. FELLER: There is no --23 I usually do have a case when I ask THE COURT: 24 questions like that.

MR. FELLER: Your Honor, what I can promise you is

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there is no RICO case and no count, at least plaintiffs haven't cited one and we haven't been able to find one, never. In the jurisdiction argument, you were talking about doing something for the first time. This would be the first case ever where a RICO charge is upheld as pled against Takata, who has pled guilty and admitted responsibility, admitted committing a fraud, and that RICO charge is then upheld against the victims of that fraud who were paid \$850 million in restitution, in restitution. That has never happened.

Again, we're talking about RICO, right? We're not saving some consumer protection statute, we're not talking about

Again, we're talking about RICO, right? We're not saying some consumer protection statute, we're not talking about unjust enrichment.

THE COURT: I got it. I got it.

MR. FELLER: We're talking about RICO.

THE COURT: I got it. It's a good argument.

MR. FELLER: And, Your Honor, again, I want to go through a couple of these provisions in detail to understand what this is because we're going to end with the factual basis, which is the important thing. Right?

So relevant considerations, Page 7, A1: "Beginning on or about January 28, 2016, the defendant, Takata, began fully cooperating with the office's" -- the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan -- "investigation, including reporting the conduct to the offices, assisting and facilitating timely interviews of

current and former employees of the defendant, promptly collecting and producing evidence located in a foreign country, along with translations, engaging in frequent communication with the offices about relevant facts and providing all nonprivileged facts relating to individual involvement in the conduct described in the Information and the Statement of Fact attached hereto as Exhibit B."

Your Honor, if we could, Page 18, which follows along on a similar line, this is the defendant's cooperation and reporting obligations, again Takata.

Quote: "The defendant agrees that its cooperation pursuant to this paragraph shall include, but not be limited to the following: The defendant shall truthfully disclose all factual information, not covered by privilege, with respect to its activities, those of its parent company and affiliates, and those of its present and former directors, officers, employees, agents, and consultants, including any evidence or allegations and internal or external investigations about which the defendant has any knowledge or about which the office may inquire.

"This obligation of truthful disclosure includes, but is not limited to the obligation of the defendant to provide to the offices upon request any document, record, or other tangible evidence about which the offices may inquire of the defendant."

Your Honor, last one I think in this series, and it's going to be Page 23, and it talks about breach of the agreement.

And I'll skip over some of it just for time, but it says:

"If the defendant commits any felony," is A; B,

"provides in connection with this agreement deliberately

false, incomplete, or misleading information" -- and you go

down to the third line from the bottom -- "the defendant

shall thereafter be subject to prosecution for any Federal

criminal violation of which the offices have knowledge,

including but not limited to, Federal criminal violations

relating to the conduct set forth in the Information."

So, Your Honor, pursuant to this agreement, Takata is required to be truthful. It is required to cooperate. It is required to provide documents and interviews. It is required to assist in the prosecution of individuals who were in fact prosecuted. Right? Actually one of the few large sort of corporate frauds where individuals ended up -- Takata employees ended up being prosecuted. If they don't do that, if they don't do all that truthfully and substantially and completely, the Plea Agreement goes out the window and they, themselves, can be prosecuted again.

And so what is it -- and again, there is a very lengthy factual basis, but just for time, if you can go to page B -- I'll start quickly at B1, Statement of Facts:

"The following statement of facts is incorporated by

reference as part of the Plea Agreement dated January 13, 2017, between the United States Department of Justice and Takata Corporation, and the parties" -- the United States and Takata -- "hereby agree and stipulate that the following information is true and accurate."

Skip one line down. "Had this matter proceeded to trial, Takata acknowledges that the fraud section and the office would have proven beyond a reasonable doubt by admissible evidence the facts alleged below and set forth in the criminal first Superseding Information."

And, Your Honor, last thing I promise, B6, this is the heart of the factual recitation in the agreement incorporated into the judgment, incorporated into the Restitution Order. B6, paragraph 19: "From in or around 2000 until in or around 2015" -- why is that important? Because it captures the entire time period of the conduct alleged in the Complaints and stretches into when the original Complaints in this case were filed.

"From in or around 2000 until in or around 2015,
Takata, through its executives, employees, and agents,
knowingly devised and participated in a scheme to obtain
money and enrich Takata by, among other things, inducing the
victim OEMs to purchase airbag systems from Takata that
contained faulty, inferior, nonperforming, nonconforming, or
dangerous PSAN inflators by deceiving the OEMs through the

submission of false and fraudulent reports and other information that concealed the true and accurate test results for the inflators for which the OEMs would not have otherwise purchased as they were."

Your Honor, the reason I think this is a fairly straightforward Motion to Dismiss on RICO is that you have to balance two things, and you have to determine which of those two things is plausible.

Either you accept the Plea Agreement and its recitation, in which case the OEMs cannot be co-conspirators, they cannot have participated in an enterprise, there cannot be an agreement; or you accept that the Federal Government, after a multi-year investigation, after access to millions of pages of documents and interview, being able to interview anyone they wanted after charging Takata and its employees, not only gave the car companies a pass, not only gave them a pass, didn't charge the car companies, but required Takata to pay \$850 million to parties that plaintiffs here say are co-conspirators.

Your Honor, at the first -- plaintiffs want to keep referring to the first Motion to Dismiss. I'm going to quote Mr. Prieto, and this is what he said to you. This is the transcript of the October 2015 argument. It's Docket 826, Page 50.

And he says: "Let me just, Your Honor, tell you a little bit about some of the interesting things that -- I

billion dollars.

just want to make one point concerning plausibility. You know, Iqbal says that when Your Honor is looking at determining whether to move to dismiss and whether something is plausible or not plausible, you are to use your judicial experience and common sense."

That's Mr. Prieto, he is a very smart lawyer.

Your Honor, it is completely outside of the realm -- I don't want to speak for you -- outside of my experience, whether as a prosecutor or in private practice, for a plea like that to take place and for co-conspirators to be rewarded with nearly a

THE COURT: It's a good point. I got it.

MR. FELLER: And again, we talked about some of the -- I don't want to spend time going through all of the GM allegations.

THE COURT: So I wouldn't.

MR. FELLER: Yeah. So I'm not going to.

THE COURT: Then don't.

MR. FELLER: Just one last point, Your Honor, which is all that plaintiffs really allege in this Complaint as it exists is that these OEMs should have known that something happened during testing, that something happened out there. There is no --

THE COURT: Is there such a thing as deliberate ignorance, closing your eyes, that kind of thing?

Not for RICO, absolutely not, and there is MR. FELLER: not a single allegation anywhere in any of these four Complaints of any agreement, of any meeting between anyone at Takata and GM saying, hey, let's agree, we think it's a great idea to put defective airbags in our cars that are going to blowup. just not there. Thank you, Your Honor.

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THE COURT: Thank you.

Anybody else for any defendant who wishes to add to this issue?

Good afternoon, Your Honor. Suhana Han from MS. HAN: Sullivan & Cromwell on behalf of the Volkswagen Audi defendants.

I think Mr. Feller made some very compelling points with respect to the plausibility in light of the Plea Agreement, but I think we can go even beyond that by actually looking at what's alleged in the Complaint. And Your Honor asked --

> THE COURT: This is only related to RICO, right? MS. HAN: Yes, exactly, RICO.

We touched upon this a little bit earlier, but I think you look at the big picture and how this RICO claim came up in the first instance. We talked a little bit about personal jurisdiction. We talked about the way in which plaintiffs brought the lawsuit, and I know that Mr. Glueckstein raised those, but I think it's worth mentioning again, that the original Complaints --

1 THE COURT: You didn't think I heard it or I'm getting too old? 2 3 No, no, no, I think it helps set the stage. MS. HAN: 4 So we talked earlier about how the Complaints were, certain of 5 the Complaints were filed in other jurisdictions and then there 6 was the direct filed Complaint. 7 THE COURT: Oh, we're not going to go through that for 8 an hour. 9 MS. HAN: No, no, no. My only point, Your Honor, is that in the direct filed Complaint --10 11 THE COURT: That's the Sullivan & Cromwell specialty 12 It's a great firm. I've had law clerks go already. I got it. 13 there. The RICO claims were raised in the direct 14 MS. HAN: 15 filed Complaint, and as laid out in our papers, we believe that there's no personal jurisdiction, but plaintiffs are desperately 16 17 holding on to the RICO claim in an attempt to try and establish 18 jurisdiction, but as Mr. Feller noted, they have some real 19 problems. 20 I want to note a couple of allegations that existed in 21 the Honda Complaint and, as Mr. Feller noted earlier, what's 22 really important here is recognizing that on these issues Your 23 Honor hasn't previously ruled on them. 24 THE COURT: Has not?

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MS. HAN: Has not.

1 I think it's different, I agree with you, THE COURT: 2 because of the Takata plea. You think it's different for other 3 reasons. 4 MS. HAN: Yes. 5 THE COURT: And that's what you're going to tell me. 6 MS. HAN: Yes. 7 THE COURT: All right. 8 MS. HAN: I think that the Takata Plea Agreement really 9 sets it up and really hits home the point that there is no 10 plausibility argument here. 11 THE COURT: But you think you have other grounds. 12 MS. HAN: Yes, we have other grounds. 13 THE COURT: Okay. 14 MS. HAN: And you mentioned earlier about granting a 15 Motion to Dismiss and how the Appellate Court is going to react to that, but, Your Honor, the RICO case law is very robust, and 16 17 we have very helpful guidance by recent Eleventh Circuit 18 decisions which we believe, and laid out in our papers, really set out the standards. The allegations in those cases as well 19 20 we believe really, in our view, should inform the decision here 21 to grant the dismissal. 22 So I want to start off first by talking about the RICO 23 enterprise, and I'm not going to go through the elements. 24 Honor is very familiar with all of that.

THE COURT: Oh, you don't have to do that.

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MS. HAN: So I want to point out that with respect to the RICO claims, there are no factual allegations about an agreement between Takata and the newly added OEMs to conceal the alleged defect, no agreement, and I want to contrast that with the types of allegations that were included in the Honda Complaint.

THE COURT: That's no longer a viable Complaint, right?

MS. HAN: That is correct, Your Honor.

THE COURT: I just want to make sure I'm revisiting a Complaint that's no longer in existence.

MS. HAN: Well, the reason why I'm pointing it out is so that I can highlight for Your Honor the types of allegations that at the time you deemed were sufficient for purposes of a conspiracy Complaint -- conspiracy claim. Here, I think it's important to bear in mind that there are no such allegations.

THE COURT: Okay.

MS. HAN: So for example, in the Honda Complaint plaintiffs alleged that Takata and Honda co-drafted a letter to NHTSA, and they fraudulently omitted that one of those deployments caused the death of a particular individual. So there in the Honda Complaint they talked about an agreement between Takata and another OEM.

THE COURT: Sounds easy.

MS. HAN: They also talked about -- they also alleged in that Complaint that Honda collected inflators from scrap

1 yards and transmitted them to Takata to perform secret --2 THE COURT: What do they say about your clients? 3 MS. HAN: So with respect to the newly added OEMs, they 4 talk a lot about exchange of information, adverse test results, 5 communications that the new OEMs had with the regulators, the 6 advertisements that the OEMs provided to consumers, the 7 communications that the new OEMs had with other OEMs, and as 8 were laid out in our papers --9 THE COURT: Well, they kind of want to say that you should have known at least. They say more than that, but I want 10 11 to start with that, that you should have known by all of this. 12 Do you agree you should have known? 13 That's what they're trying to allege. MS. HAN: 14 THE COURT: Oh, no. They allege that you knew, but do you agree that you should have known? 15 Actually, Your Honor they allege both. 16 MS. HAN: They 17 allege that we knew and we should have known. 18 THE COURT: Okav. 19 MS. HAN: And that is not enough for purposes of RICO 20 claims. 21 THE COURT: Maybe, maybe. 22 So, again, we're talking about just RICO MS. HAN: 23 There are a lot of other claims that they're raising, but here. 24 the standard is very clear in terms of what you need to allege 25 for RICO and there is not one allegation whereby they claim that

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Takata and one of the new OEMs acted in concert together to try
and conceal the alleged defect, and that is completely
consistent with what Mr. Feller talked about in terms --
         THE COURT:
                     If they tell you about all of these
problems and you knew, that would be enough.
         MS. HAN:
                  No, Your Honor.
         THE COURT: It wouldn't be enough.
         MS. HAN: Right, because the law is very clear that --
                    Knowledge is not enough.
         THE COURT:
                  Knowledge is not enough because, in fact, you
         MS. HAN:
could have, at best, conscious parallelism.
         THE COURT:
                     Okay.
                  Right? And the Eleventh Circuit has made
         MS. HAN:
crystal clear that that is insufficient to allege a RICO
enterprise. So let's say --
         THE COURT: And your best case on a Motion to Dismiss,
not on a Motion for Summary Judgment, is what?
                   Even on a motion --
         MS. HAN:
         THE COURT: Give me the best case from the Eleventh
Circuit.
         MS. HAN:
                   So the best --
         THE COURT: A Motion to Dismiss that says granted,
affirmed, great opinion, District Judge.
         MS. HAN: So I am going to refer you to three
decisions.
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THE COURT: Oh, three.

MS. HAN: The first one is Almanza, A-1-m-a-n-z-a.

THE COURT: I know.

MS. HAN: 851 F.3d 1060, that's a 2017 Eleventh Circuit decision. And in that case, again, the Eleventh Circuit looked at the particular allegations and the conduct involved ordinary business conduct and that's what's at issue here.

What plaintiffs say, and it's really question begging because they claim that what made this enterprise illegal was that the OEMs engaged in unlawful conduct.

As you can tell, that's very circular arguing because at the end of the day, what they're really pointing to are the examples that I provided. They are talking about communications that the OEMs had with Takata with respect to test results. Of course, that's what a normal relationship between a supplier and a purchaser is, you would expect to see that. You would expect that a car company would have communications with their regulators. Again, that's very typical, that's ordinary business conduct. That is insufficient to allege a RICO enterprise.

I think a good case to contrast that with, Your Honor, is what plaintiffs rely on in their papers, and that's the Mohawk Industries case, that's a 2005 Eleventh Circuit decision, 411 F.3d 1252, and in that case what Plaintiffs argued --

THE COURT: It's a Motion to Dismiss case?

1 What they argued was that defendants MS. HAN: Yes. 2 hired recruiters to bring in illegal workers, and what makes 3 that case different from ours is the conduct at issue was that 4 the defendant was alleged to have been involved with the actual 5 recruiters by supplying Social Security cards for use when an 6 illegal employee was required to demonstrate identity. Right? 7 So there you've got some conduct that nobody would say is part 8 of the ordinary course --THE COURT: So the Motion to Dismiss was denied in that 9 10 case. The Motion to Dismiss in that case was 11 MS. HAN: 12 granted and it was affirmed. 13 THE COURT: Even though all of that activity was done? 14 MS. HAN: I'm sorry? 15 THE COURT: Even though all that activity was done? 16 But the point there is, that was the MS. HAN: Yes. 17 type of activity where you have conduct that is not ordinary 18 business, right, so you don't --19 THE COURT: But the Motion to Dismiss was granted. 20 Yes, the Motion to Dismiss was granted. 21 THE COURT: Even though there was activity. 22 missing something and it's probably my fault. 23 So in that particular case, plaintiffs argued MS. HAN: 24 that this constituted a RICO enterprise. 25 THE COURT: And the Motion to Dismiss was granted.

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             MS. HAN:
                       I'm sorry, the Motion to Dismiss was denied.
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    Sorry, Your Honor.
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             THE COURT: That's why you got me confused.
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             MS. HAN: I'm sorry, I misheard, yes. No, it was
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    denied.
                         But I think what's helpful to you is if the
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             THE COURT:
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   Motion to Dismiss is granted and affirmed, because you want me
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    to grant the Motion to Dismiss.
             MS. HAN: But the reason is that --
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             THE COURT: Those are the cases I prefer.
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             MS. HAN: But the allegation --
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             THE COURT: You prefer all of them, but then we get
13
    confused.
                      The reason why I'm highlighting that point is
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             MS. HAN:
    that the allegations are different in that case.
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16
             THE COURT: I know, I got it. There are hundreds of
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    cases that are different in RICO.
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             MS. HAN:
                       Right. And so our case, the new defendants,
19
    our case, we fall in the category of ordinary business conduct.
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             THE COURT:
                         The Almanza case I understand.
21
    don't like.
                 So give me the third one that you have.
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             MS. HAN: So other cases that we would refer you to --
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             THE COURT: Where the Motion to Dismiss was granted and
24
    affirmed -- you've got it, it's in your pleadings -- and
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   affirmed by the Eleventh Circuit.
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1 Yes, we have all of those cases --MS. HAN: THE COURT: Give me the third one. 2 3 Okay. So then there's Ray versus Spirit MS. HAN: Airlines, 836 F.3d 1340. 4 5 THE COURT: The Motion to Dismiss was granted. 6 MS. HAN: Yes. 7 THE COURT: And the Eleventh Circuit affirmed? 8 MS. HAN: Yes. 9 THE COURT: And now you can talk about that. 10 MS. HAN: Right. 11 THE COURT: What were the allegations? 12 MS. HAN: So in the Ray versus Spirit Airlines, again, 13 this was allegations against an airline whereby they were accused of entering into RICO enterprise with respect to fees 14 15 charged by the airlines. 16 Again, this is the type of conduct involving normal 17 course, what businesses would do in terms of using computers and 18 charging fees, and that was not enough. 19 THE COURT: Tell me the wrongful conduct in that 20 Complaint. 21 So there --MS. HAN: 22 THE COURT: They obviously didn't have a lawyer like 23 Mr. Prieto. He would have included something that looked bad in 24 that Complaint. 25 MS. HAN: So there the allegation was that the RICO

1 enterprise included technology vendors who worked together to 2 misrepresent the fee. 3 THE COURT: That's it. And the Spirit Airline was a 4 victim in that case? 5 No, they were accused of being part of the MS. HAN: 6 RICO enterprise. 7 THE COURT: Okay. And it was dismissed because there 8 weren't enough allegations --9 MS. HAN: Yes. 10 THE COURT: -- of fraud. 11 Right, because the Court held plaintiff MS. HAN: 12 alleged wholly innocent activity undertaken as a course of 13 regular business. THE COURT: Okay. Sounds like a bad Complaint, I 14 agree, and he wrote a whole opinion on that. Okay. 15 16 But I also want to highlight here -- we MS. HAN: 17 talked about this earlier at the outset -- that plaintiffs have 18 had the benefit of years of discovery, and granted --THE COURT: With the other defendants --19 20 MS. HAN: Right. 21 THE COURT: -- who are the bad guys, too, you say. 22 MS. HAN: Well, because what they need to show is an 23 agreement, a meeting of the minds with Takata, and they've had 24 access to Takata's documents. So Mr. Prieto talked earlier that 25 not all of the newly added defendants have produced documents,

1 although many of us have already or are in the process of 2 producing the NHTSA documents, but they have had Takata's 3 documents. They have had the benefit of years and years of 4 discovery --5 THE COURT: They want yours. 6 MS. HAN: I'm sorry? 7 THE COURT: They want yours. 8 MS. HAN: Yes, Your Honor, but they've had Takata's --THE COURT: Your emails --9 10 MS. HAN: They have had Takata's --11 THE COURT: -- that say, hey, we got it, we're willing 12 to gamble on those airbags and make money. 13 But if there was an agreement --MS. HAN: THE COURT: There wouldn't be an email like that. 14 15 If there was an agreement with Takata, we MS. HAN: would expect that Takata's documents would reflect that, and 16 17 they have Takata's documents. 18 THE COURT: Okay. I got it. 19 Your Honor, so I talked a little bit about 20 the enterprise, but I also want to talk about the second element 21 with respect to the racketeering activity, and here, again, I 22 think the law is pretty clear in terms of the fact that you need 23 to demonstrate scienter. 24 THE COURT: Oh, I know that. That's another way of 25 saying knowledge, no?

MS. HAN: Yes, knowledge, you're right, and one of the topics --

THE COURT: Do you know who drafted the RICO statute?

MS. HAN: No, I'm afraid I don't, Your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. It wasn't me, someone older and smarter than me. They taught at a great law school, that I didn't go to, I went to the undergraduate school, and his son is a judge in Chicago, a Federal judge.

Go ahead. See, now you're going, to have to Google that.

MS. HAN: Going back to the idea of scienter, I want to introduce the concept of group pleading which Your Honor mentioned in your notice, and I'm going to just say very briefly that of the 1,135 paragraphs in the Puhalla Complaint referencing defendants, only six of the more than a thousand paragraphs break out the entities separately, and those six paragraphs relate to only the corporate entity. I highlight that statistic, Your Honor, because that is very telling in terms of how they have lumped all of the defendants together to make their allegations of scienter. They attempt to try and establish scienter based on that.

THE COURT: I should make them redraft the Complaint and put the sections with each defendant, so that way they'll have this is what Volkswagen did, this is what Audi did, this is what General Motors did, right?

1 MS. HAN: They have --THE COURT: You would like that. 2 3 The law requires it, Your Honor. MS. HAN: 4 THE COURT: All right. 5 And they have failed to satisfy the clear 6 burden to allege scienter along with, you know, failing to 7 allege with sufficient particularity. I just want to highlight, 8 Your Honor, some of the examples of the way in which they rely on this group pleading. 10 So paragraph 281 of the Puhalla Complaint, they say the 11 Volkswagen defendants, and again, they define Volkswagen 12 defendants as lumping together four separate corporate entities. 13 THE COURT: Volkswagen, Audi. MS. HAN: Volkswagen AG, Audi AG, Volkswagen Group of 14 15 America, Inc., and Audi of America, four separate corporate entities lumped together in the vast bulk of the allegations in 16 17 the Complaint. So paragraph 281: "The Volkswagen defendant's conduct 18 in furtherance of the scheme was intentional." 19 20 That is totally conclusory. 21 In the Boyd Complaint, paragraph 212: "New Chrysler's conduct in furtherance of the scheme was intentional." 22 23 That is the type of allegation that we're dealing with 24 as plaintiffs try and demonstrate scienter, which, again, the 25 law is very clear that that is insufficient.

THE COURT: All right. I got it.

MS. HAN: Group pleading also comes into play -- we talked earlier this morning about personal jurisdiction and Mr. Glueckstein talked about that, but again, the way in which plaintiffs try and satisfy their pleading burden is they just throw in all of the defendants together, and contrary to their argument, this is not an acceptable form of pleading. The fact that they're related corporate entities, that does not excuse their lack of particularity and specificity.

The last point I would like to make, Your Honor, relates to what I alluded to earlier about Rule 9(b) requirement for particularly.

Again, the law is clear that this is required, and this is set out in Brooks v Blue Cross and Blue Shield, an Eleventh Circuit decision, 116 F.3d 1364.

"Plaintiffs must allege the precise statements, documents, or misrepresentations made; the time, place, and person responsible for the statement."

That's clearly written in this decision.

If you look at the Complaint, the vast majority of the allegations, again, are very general. They don't specify time, place, and person; and in fact, with respect to the allegations against the Volkswagen and Audi defendants, they do not identify a single person who allegedly was responsible. So we submit, Your Honor, that those such allegations again are insufficient

as a matter of law.

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And then the final point about 12 -- I mean 1962(d), this is the conspiracy claim, our view is that they failed to allege a primary violation, so, therefore, they fail to allege any form of conspiracy. And to the extent that they claim that they do, again, we go back to all of the allegations I pointed to earlier failing to show that there was any type of agreement between Takata or any of the newly added OEMs.

THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

MS. HAN: Okay.

MR. FELLER: Your Honor, two things.

THE COURT: Didn't you speak before?

MR. FELLER: I did. I wanted to give you my best case cites since you didn't ask.

THE COURT: Your what?

MR. FELLER: My best case cites. First of all, I want to tell you Robert Blakey wrote RICO. And second of all, I wanted to give you my best case cites.

THE COURT: He's still around, but retired.

MR. FELLER: Oh, I know. Your Honor, I think on all fours, and you know the case well since you granted the RICO Motion to Dismiss and the Eleventh Circuit affirmed you, is American Dental Association, 605 F.3d 1283. The pincite is 1293. It's an allegation that a bunch of insurance companies got together --

1 THE COURT: Yeah, I remember. 2 MR. FELLER: -- to screw the dentists. This is the 3 Eleventh Circuit. 4 THE COURT: I don't think they guite said it like that. 5 That's probably the way I probably said it. 6 MR. FELLER: Well, I think the point, Judge, though 7 is -- and again, the pincite is 1293, you can look at it, but 8 the quote is "We find no specific representation in any of the communications plaintiffs reference." It's exactly what we have 10 here. 11 THE COURT: Okay. All right. You want to save your 12 RICO claim or -- any other defendant? 13 MR. MALLOW: Your Honor, Michael Mallow. Would you like to hear about proximate cause and the recyclers, or would 14 15 you like to hear from Mr. Prieto first on --16 It's easier to keep it like this I think. THE COURT: 17 I may bring him up on that, kind of like a preemptive attack 18 though. 19 You don't want those cases? 20 MR. PRIETO: Excuse me? THE COURT: You don't want those cases? 21 22 MR. PRIETO: No, there were notes, so I didn't want to 23 read them. 24 Your Honor, let me address first Mr. Feller's 25 arguments. In all those documents that he took you through, you

never heard once the words GM, VW, Mercedes, or FCA. There was no factual finding that they were victims in those cases.

THE COURT: I got it. You made that point before, but

MR. PRIETO: Of course.

it means something though, right?

THE COURT: It's unusual.

MR. PRIETO: It means something, it means something,

Your Honor --

THE COURT: It kind of means a lot though.

MR. PRIETO: -- at summary judgment or at trial, and I'll tell you why. Because we've always made this very clear, this goes to the weight of the evidence, all right, number one.

THE COURT: See, I don't know because I had that problem when it originally occurred. Remember I said -- I think I heard it even before any pleading was filed. The media today -- with social media, I haven't checked today, but sometimes I find out what happens in my cases by looking at social media before I even can look at the pleadings.

When Takata pled guilty, do you remember I said, oh, that's a big deal because they're the lead defendant, the lead wrongdoer, right? But it got even better for the Government, and perhaps worse for you, in the sense that some of the other defendants who eventually became defendants were considered victims and it seems inconsistent, especially when their order -- when Takata, the wrongdoer, the lead wrongdoer without any

question, is ordered to pay restitution to the victims.

So even though there's no need for a prosecutor or a judge to make any findings, the fact that you're ordering restitution, a massive amount, to victims puts the so-called victims in a good position. They'd say, hey, hold on, folks, we're victims and now we are being sued, not by the Government, but we are being sued by the plaintiffs, so we get it from both ends.

MR. PRIETO: Because it's not mutually exclusive.

THE COURT: Well, that's the issue.

MR. PRIETO: It is not.

THE COURT: I don't know. I am very uncomfortable, especially in a RICO claim.

MR. PRIETO: Actually, I think you should be less -you should be more comfortable in a RICO claim than in any other
claim because RICO is based on conspiracy.

THE COURT: Yeah, but, you know, when it originally passed -- there's no denial it's been expanded a lot by the courts that I have to follow -- The original meaning of all of that was for the Mafia, right? So think about it. If we were to simplify it, it would be like the victims of extortion then get sued at some point, you know, when they're victims. They're being extorted or penalized somehow by the big Mafia guys, and then all of a sudden, there's a civil lawsuit because maybe they're owners of a bunch of grocery stores in Little Italy in

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New York.
          Okay? Let's think of that hypothetical.
get sued and they say, wait a second, we were being extorted by
the Mafia guys, now you're suing us because we knew something,
or we should have known that they were bad guys?
         MR. PRIETO:
                     It's not that they knew.
         THE COURT:
                    What did they do? What did they do?
        MR. PRIETO: It's not that they knew only.
         THE COURT:
                    What did they do?
        MR. PRIETO: What they did was, they together, in
cahoots with Takata, created a scheme to defraud.
                    But it has to be more individualized,
         THE COURT:
doesn't it? You can't just say they -- if you went in your
closing argument in front of the jury, they, in cahoots with
Takata, were in a scheme to defraud --
        MR. PRIETO: Yes.
         THE COURT: -- I wouldn't even let you go to the jury.
You would have to tell me what they did specifically
individually. Don't you agree?
        MR. PRIETO:
                     Absolutely.
                     Individually and separately, even
         THE COURT:
corporations that are related, they're cousins.
                     That's a different issue.
        MR. PRIETO:
                    Even that, you have to say they did this,
         THE COURT:
this one did that, this one did the other.
        MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, let me just back up. We have
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alleged specifically as to GM and VW, very specifically that they had knowledge with Takata, both of them had knowledge together about this defect and they failed to disclose it for years and for years and for years.

This is a classic RICO case applied in the civil context and the reason is, why? Because civil -- RICO in general is designed to combat wrongful conduct over a period of years. That's why you have RICO. And this case is a classic example of why RICO should apply in the civil context. For years and years and years they failed to disclose both together that there was a problem with these cars and for their own selfish economic reasons, they failed to disclose it and went along.

And our Complaint -- and I can go as long as you want me to go --

THE COURT: You gave me the paragraphs.

MR. PRIETO: Well, that was as to another defendant.

If you want the paragraphs as to GM and VW, I have them in front of me.

THE COURT: Okay. Give them to me.

MR. PRIETO: Paragraph 9, 102, and 103, and this is what those three paragraphs in combination start off with as it relates to GM:

"When Takata approached GM with its cheaper ammonium nitrate inflators, GM asked Autoliv," which was a competitor

to Takata, "to match Takata's price. Autoliv tested

Takata's ammonium nitrate inflators and told GM ammonium

nitrate was so unstable that, quote, 'blew the inflator to

bits.' Totally destroyed the fixture." And quote, "turned

it into shrapnel." That's a quote. "And notified GM of the

results no later than 1999."

That's just one of the allegations in our Complaint.

Again, paragraph 10: "Takata's testing of airbag inflators from 2000 to 2007 confirm inflator stability problems, overly aggressive behavior when deployed which could lead to ruptures and inflator's tendency to flame or catch fire when airbags rupture. Takata shared these results with GM's head of inflator technology who stayed on with New GM after the bankruptcy. Also, several GMs from before the bankruptcy were also aware and raised significant concerns about the Takata inflators."

"Takata continued" -- paragraph 14: "Takata continued to report testing results to GM showing energetic disassembly" -- that's a euphemism for a rupture -- and "nonconformances," involving "high ballistics."

In 2011, according to paragraph 15, "GM reported to Takata that a driver in a GM vehicle suffered from burns when the airbag deployed. In late 2003 (sic) and early 2014, airbag explosions occurred in two 2013 Chevy Cruze vehicles, in one case completely blinding the driver in one

1 eye. GM convinced Takata to come up with an excuse to limit 2 the scope of the problem, allowing GM -- and GM to blame 3 Takata airbag ruptures on a manufacturing defect to avoid 4 issuing a larger recall." 5 Where does that come from, that GM THE COURT: 6 convinced Takata? 7 MR. PRIETO: I would assume it comes from some of the documents that we got from Takata, Your Honor, that related to 8 some of these automakers. 10 THE COURT: You're getting a lifeline. See, it's good 11 to have a lifeline. 12 MR. PRIETO: Let me make sure that I read one or two 13 other -- if you'd give me one second, Your Honor. THE COURT: We are losing our audience. See, if I wait 14 long enough, we won't have anybody in the courtroom. 15 16 MR. PRIETO: No, I have it. I have it. I just need to find it. 17 18 So paragraph 306: The head of inflator technology 19 demanded that Takata, "put the story together that may 20 potentially limit the scope of a recall, rather than 21 disclose the inflator defect to ensure the safety of drivers 22 and passengers in new and old GM vehicles." But who did that? Who said that? 23 THE COURT: MR. PRIETO: Noldan, who I believe is the head of 24

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inflator technology for GM.

So engineers at GM knew there were problems, they discussed them with Takata, and they still failed to disclose this defect for years and for years and for years.

So there's no question that we're alleged -- and I could go on, I have more paragraphs that I can go on. I can give you the paragraphs if you want me to give them to you.

You know, the funny thing is that they really didn't focus on our Complaints. They talked about the case law, they talked about the Takata plea, they talked about cases where the Eleventh Circuit and Your Honor had interpreted different Complaints. But if you look closely at the factual allegations about knowledge --

THE COURT: What do you want me to say about the Takata plea?

MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, what I would like the Court to say is, first of all, the Takata plea at this stage, under Rule 201, should not be considered; but even if it's considered, even if it's considered, it should be an issue for either summary judgment or trial.

THE COURT: Okay. So we go to summary judgment and we have the plea still. That's not going to change.

MR. PRIETO: It's not going to change, but it doesn't negate their knowledge independent of what Takata may have told them.

THE COURT: So then they shouldn't have been

1 compensated as victims. It's inconsistent. 2 MR. PRIETO: It is not inconsistent. Well, in fact, if 3 you remember when this came up back in February of 2017 or 2018, 4 when Takata pled quilty --5 That has been done already I take it. THE COURT: They've been compensated already. 6 7 MR. PRIETO: I assume they've got their money. 8 THE COURT: I wanted to sound more elegant for a 9 change. 10 MR. PRIETO: Someone from the Plaintiffs' Bar objected 11 at sentencing and the judge said this should not impact the 12 civil case because you can be a victim in one case and not in 13 another. THE COURT: He said that? 14 15 MR. PRIETO: That's what he said. In fact, if Your Honor wants, I can supplement the record because we said it, I 16 17 think, back in September 2017. I think this plea took place in 18 January of 2017. So it is an issue that we need to contend with 19 at trial, but it's not an issue that's going to negate our case. 20 It's an issue of fact, assuming it comes in. 21 By the way, if it comes in, we're also going to bring 22 in the fact -- I mean, these defendants that are making these 23 arguments are not babes in the woods.

VW's counsel talks about or FCA's counsel talks about

ordinary business conduct. Well, you know, they participated,

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both these defendants. GM participated in business conduct which led to criminal charges because they hid an ignition switch defect. They had to pay \$900 million. VW, also during ordinary business conduct, cheated and failed to disclose an emissions trick where they misrepresented the emission standards for their cars. I looked at the Plea Agreement by VW. You know what the baseline fine was? I had to look again at the numbers. I think it was \$8 billion. So they paid billions of dollars for criminal conduct, and at the same time they come here and everything that we have alleged is simply ordinary business conduct. Well, this is not the first rodeo of them committing unlawful conduct, both as to VW and as to GM.

So when this case at summary judgment or trial gets tried, they can bring in Takata's plea. We will bring independent knowledge that they knew, independent of what Takata was telling them, that there was a defect and they failed to disclose it. And Your Honor has tried a lot of conspiracy cases in the 30 years that you've been on the bench and if RICO was premised on a couple --

THE COURT: 32, but who's counting.

MR. PRIETO: Okay. So RICO was basically modeled after the Clayton Act, or at least the civil provisions of it, but it's also modeled after basically criminal conspiracy law, and this argument that a conspirator cannot lie to another, as a matter of law should be rejected by RICO, and I'll give you an

1 example. 2 THE COURT: But a conspirator is generally not a 3 victim, you would agree --4 MR. PRIETO: Let me give you an example. 5 THE COURT: -- who gets restitution ordered by a 6 Federal judge. 7 MR. PRIETO: No. Four people rob a bank. The guy that 8 goes in to get the money puts something in his pocket that he shouldn't have, so he takes more money for himself and doesn't tell the other co-conspirators. Those co-conspirators are 10 11 victims, okay, but the overall agreement --12 THE COURT: I wouldn't order restitution. 13 MR. PRIETO: But that's what RICO is based on, and that's why the case that we cited to Your Honor --14 15 THE COURT: I don't know if I would let that RICO 16 Complaint stand, but yours seems better. I don't know. I just don't know. 17 18 MR. PRIETO: So here's a quote from a case, a 19 conspiracy case, a Motion for New Trial, criminal case, 20 conspiracy case. The defendant in that case got convicted and 21 he said, look, the co-conspirator lied to me, and this is what 22 the Court said: It's U.S. versus Gohari which we quoted in our 23 documents. "It is also true that Cabrera admitted that he at times 24

lied to his co-conspirators, but the Court does not agree

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1 with defendant's claim that this negates the existence of a 2 conspiratorial scheme. As suggested by the age-old maxim 3 'no honor among thieves' co-conspirators may reach some 4 basic agreements among themselves but also engage in 5 self-interested lying to each other on other points. 6 commonplace, for example, for co-conspirators to agree in 7 principle to share proceeds of their illegal acts and yet, 8 in practice, to try to cheat each other out of parts of the proceeds." 9 10 THE COURT: And is that what this case is about, do you think? 11 12 MR. PRIETO: I think this case --13 THE COURT: Takata was cheating these other defendants. 14 MR. PRIETO: Takata was in some respects 15 misrepresenting because they wanted to continue to do business with them, and they, in turn, for example --16 17 THE COURT: Looked the other way. 18 MR. PRIETO: In certain parts looked the other way --19 THE COURT: Is that enough, to look the other way? 20 No, but I'm not -- the other statement is MR. PRIETO: 21 that in other parts, they knew there was a defect. Takata may 22 have been telling them only most of the story, but maybe in some 23 respects --THE COURT: And knowing is enough for RICO, for 24 25 racketeering?

1 MR. PRIETO: Of course knowing is enough. 2 THE COURT: Just knowing? 3 MR. PRIETO: Yes, absolutely. It's absolutely enough for RICO. 4 5 Let me make just a couple of more comments, and again, 6 I want the Court -- it is completely, completely plausible that 7 Takata may have lied to them in some respects and yet conspired, 8 and we've alleged they conspired, to conceal this defect. 9 I think the issue is: Are they mutually exclusive? The answer is no, as this Court has held and as we have alleged 10 11 and been consistent with for the last couple of years. 12 I'll give you another example. You heard what the 13 Special Master said, and I quote again, "This is consistent 14 with the recommendation of the consenting OEMs and obviates 15 the need to determine whether a particular OEM can 16 demonstrate that it was a" -- and this Special Master says, quote -- "a victim of Takata's fraud." 17 So no finding was made of any specific OEM being a 18 victim of Takata's fraud. 19 20 Because it's in quotes. THE COURT: 21 MR. PRIETO: Well, No, not because it's in quotes, 22 because they all agreed to basically allocate their money, and 23 there was never any finding as to who actually was an OEM or 24 automaker victim of Takata.

Let me give you another example. Each of these new

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1 defendants, if they say that they were somehow victims and the Government considered victims, and Mr. Feller said they've been 2 3 investigating this thing for years, not one of any of these new 4 defendants produced records to the Department of Justice. 5 original ones, the legacy ones did. We've asked them whether 6 they produced records to the Department of Justice, these 7 so-called victims, these four new defendants. They've 8 represented to us that none of the new defendants produced any records to the Department of Justice. 10 THE COURT: Well, how did the money -- how was it 11 apportioned? 12 MR. PRIETO: They agreed. 13 There had to be some method. THE COURT: 14 MR. PRIETO: There was a pot of money. There was a pot 15 of money and there was an agreement and there was no finding, according to the Special Master, of who was the victim and who 16 17 wasn't. That's more appropriate --THE COURT: It's kind of like attorneys' fees are 18 19 divided, huh? 20 Like attorneys' fees, Your Honor. MR. PRIETO: 21 THE COURT: Okay. 22 I think the bottom line is, this debate MR. PRIETO: 23 should be a debate for trial. 24 I got it. THE COURT: I got it. 25 MR. PRIETO: Mr. Feller should be able to link up -- if

1 GM was truly a victim, at trial he should be able to put on 2 evidence that he was a victim and show Takata's records going to 3 his client --4 THE COURT: Well, he says it's your burden in the first 5 place. 6 MR. PRIETO: Judge, but we have alleged independent 7 knowledge on their part very specifically. 8 THE COURT: I got it. 9 MR. PRIETO: Very specifically. 10 THE COURT: Do you push the "I got it" button every 11 once in a while. 12 I got it. 13 MR. PRIETO: I want to address the -- You know, we have alleged classic -- both a substantive RICO claim under 18 U.S.C. 14 15 1962(c) and 1962(d). 16 Let me tell you about the cases that they cite, and 17 you'll see this as a common thread in all of the cases, In Re: 18 Managed Care, American Dental, Almanza, what those Courts all 19 said, that there was no allegation of RICO, is that there was 20 parallel conduct. 21 In other words, the defendants were doing unlawful 22 things in parallel, but they weren't talking to each other about 23 an agreement or an enterprise. That's what you held in In Re: 24 Managed Care --25

THE COURT: You've got emails here.

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MR. PRIETO: Of course, we have emails where they're talking to each other about a defect that they know about and they failed to disclose. Almanza was such a case. THE COURT: For each defendant separately. MR. PRIETO: Yes, Takata with each defendant separately. And the new Amended Complaint is going to have that with the identification of the date and the email? MR. PRIETO: We could do that. I don't know whether you want that as to all four defendants or simply with respect to Daimler Mercedes. THE COURT: Well, what's good for one is good for the other. But let me just say, so Almanza, there was MR. PRIETO: parallel conduct and that's what the Court said. That was a she went through the analysis and there was an allegation that

case, an Eleventh Circuit case, written by Judge Rosenbaum where airlines were charging a tax that Mexico imposes on tourists and they were actually imposing it also on Mexican nationals which they should not have.

The argument there was and the allegations of the Complaint were that these airlines were doing this in parallel but not as part of an agreement amongst themselves, and the Court said that even if you have parallel conduct, even if they know that they're doing but they're not talking to each other,

that's not enough for an agreement. There must be an agreement.

THE COURT: Who talked in this case, just Takata and each defendant --

MR. PRIETO: Yes.

THE COURT: -- or the defendants with each other?

MR. PRIETO: No. The RICO is basically one defendant per Complaint. The defendant is VW, Mercedes, GM, and FCA, which is Chrysler. That is the defendant. The RICO enterprise is the defendant and Takata. All right? Because classically it's always been, under Eleventh Circuit law, that you can't have the defendant and the enterprise be one in the same, just can't do that. That goes back to that case you mentioned at the last hearing, U.S. versus Golden.

Back in the day the Eleventh Circuit was the only circuit that said you could do that, you could have a defendant be the same as the enterprise.

We have alleged distinct entities. The defendant is VW, GM, the new defendants, and the enterprise is a combination of two people, two entities that were in cahoots and were part of the enterprise, knew about it, Takata and the defendant. That's what distinguishes this case from Ray versus Spirit Airlines. That wasn't my case, but that was my firm's case. We lost that case, and the reason we lost that case is because Judge Marcus, writing for the Eleventh Circuit, said, you have not alleged that every member of the enterprise -- in that case

there were vendors who designed the website that, the allegation was, Spirit Airlines had used as a fraud. In that case, the Court said you've not alleged that these vendors that you have in the enterprise are aware of the website or were involved in the concealment. That's what distinguished Ray versus Spirit Airlines from this case.

Here in the enterprise both members, we have alleged, knew about the scheme and hid it, and those two members are Takata and then the individual defendants. We allege their roles in the enterprise, and I could quote from them if you want, we allege that they had a common purpose, which was to make money through fraud, and that's what Mohawk requires.

Let me just give you a quote from Mohawk because in reading all these RICO cases over the years, Your Honor --

THE COURT: I thought I wasn't going to use Mohawk.

You want me to use Mohawk.

MR. PRIETO: Well, because Mohawk is --

THE COURT: It helps you.

MR. PRIETO: It helps, but it treats RICO -- what people don't understand about RICO is that the U.S. Supreme Court and the Eleventh Circuit and this Court have always said for years and years and years, despite defendants' argument to the contrary, it should be liberally construed. It is a remedial statute. That's what this Court said in In Re: Managed Care. That's what Justice Thomas, writing for the

Court, said in Bridge versus Phoenix Bond, and that's what
Mohawk said. It's a remedial statute that should be interpreted
liberally.

This whole argument about the enterprise --

THE COURT: You're almost done, right?

MR. PRIETO: I'm almost done.

Paragraph 272 of the Volkswagen Complaint, quote: "The members of the Volkswagen/Takata RICO enterprise" -- and again, two distinct entities in the enterprise -- "all served a common purpose, to sell as many airbags and vehicles containing such airbags as possible and thereby maximized their revenue and profitability of the Volkswagen/Takata RICO enterprise's members. Members of the Volkswagen/Takata RICO enterprise shared the bounty generated by the enterprise, that is, by sharing the benefit derived from increased sales revenue generated by the scheme to defraud. Each member of the Volkswagen/Takata RICO enterprise benefited from the common purpose.

"The Volkswagen defendants sold or leased more class vehicles and received more for those vehicles than they would have otherwise had the scope and nature of the inflator defect not been concealed. Takata sold more defective airbags to the Volkswagen defendants than they would have otherwise had the scope and nature of the inflator defect not been concealed."

Then we went through the pattern of racketeering activity and we listed various mails and mailings and wires that served as the pattern of racketeering activity, not one, not two, but many. So we have alleged a classic RICO.

Judge, I have been alleging RICO for a long time. I did it as a prosecutor back in the day. I'm not even sure they do RICO anymore at the U.S. Attorney's Office because it used to be used when you wanted to enhance a defendant's sentence. Given the Sentencing Guidelines these days, there's no need to use RICO anymore to do that. So we have alleged a classic RICO.

THE COURT: Oh, you wonder whether there would be so many civil RICO cases if we didn't have treble damages, don't you?

MR. PRIETO: I think if Your Honor steps back --

THE COURT: That's for the professors and philosophers.

MR. PRIETO: I think whenever we look at a RICO case, if it's long-term wrongful conduct and there's underlying fraud and it's been going on for a long time and there are people that have been defrauded, that's the classic RICO case.

I think what happens is that you have people that -you know, for example, especially when you're dealing with
competitors, and also, if you look at those cases that they've
cited to you, especially Almanza and American Dental, there you
basically have competitors that basically are doing the same
thing, they know they're doing the same thing. They may be

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rule from the bench.

doing something illegal, and again, in the antitrust context, what is called conscious parallelism, conscious parallelism is not unlawful. And that means that, you know, if Chevron is competing with Mobil Oil, they could drive around South Florida and find out what the other one is charging and raise or lower their gas prices accordingly, but that's perfectly fine in the marketplace as long as they don't agree and talk to each other to lower or raise prices. If they don't talk to each other, it's called conscious parallelism. We have not alleged that. We have alleged clearly, more so than most people allege, that these folks, VW, Mercedes, GM, and FCA, were talking specifically to Takata and they had knowledge of the defect for many years and failed to disclose it. All right. Thank you. THE COURT: Should we get new people to talk in case they want to leave? MR. FELLER: I just want to respond for GM. Oh, I know. I feel like I'm in a ping-pong THE COURT: match. MR. FELLER: I promise I won't --THE COURT: It's a ping-pong match. I'm not going to

25 MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, do you want -- my partner,

Mr. Weinshall, can address the group pleading.

THE COURT: You know what I would like is for some of the people who haven't spoken before, who signed up, who wish to say anything, can do so. I think that's what's fair since it's close to five o'clock.

There may not be anybody who's never spoken before who wants to speak. I don't know.

MR. MALLOW: Your Honor, Michael Mallow on behalf of the Honda defendants.

What I want to talk to you about, Your Honor, is the recyclers' RICO claim.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. MALLOW: The primary argument in opposition to the auto manufacturers' Motion to Dismiss is that Your Honor has rule on this issue already when Your Honor addressed Takata's Motion to Dismiss the consumer plaintiffs a number of years ago. In fact, Your Honor, there was no distinction made in Takata's motion between initial consumer purchasers and subsequent consumer purchasers, and that is the issue that the plaintiffs focus on in their opposition.

The truth is, Your Honor has not addressed a proximate cause argument in the RICO context as it relates to plaintiffs such as the recyclers.

Your Honor, Holmes, Hemi, Anza, Bridge, and the Second Circuit case of Empire make it clear that for proximate cause

you need to have at least two things: One, that there needs to be a direct relation between the injury claimed and the injurious conduct or the conduct of the RICO enterprise. The second thing is there can be no more directly injured victims. And the reason that that proximate cause construction is what it is, is that the Supreme Court is concerned about multiplicities of recoveries for the same alleged conduct.

So let's look at the recyclers' claims. The recyclers claim that they have been injured not because necessarily of the misrepresentations or omissions that they contend that the defendants engaged in as part of the RICO enterprise. In fact, footnote 12 of their opposition brief makes that emphatically clear. They did not rely on misrepresentations and omissions. The injury that the recyclers suffered was as a result of the cessation of secondary sales of their products as a result of the recall.

In other words, the recyclers were able to sell recycled airbags up until the recalls weren't announced, and at that point, sales were prohibited and the recyclers were left with airbags that they had purchased as a result of purchasing vehicles as is, whether it be from auctions, insurance auctions, or what have you.

In other words, Your Honor, the recycler plaintiffs didn't get injured as a result of the RICO conduct. They were actually directly benefiting from the RICO conduct because so

long as no information was coming out, according to the allegations in the Complaint, so long as no information was coming out from Takata or the auto manufacturers suggesting that the airbags should be recalled, the recyclers were able to recover those airbags and sell them to consumers. So there is no direct relationship between what the RICO harm is and the injury that they suffered. In fact, it's an inverse relationship.

Once the, quote, "true information" came out about the inflators that led to the recall, it's at that point that they become or they claim to have become injured. That's point number one.

Point number two is, of course, there is a more direct injured party, assuming anybody was injured, and that's the initial purchasers of the vehicles who the recycler plaintiffs themselves state, and this is in their opposition brief and in their Complaints, as a result of the misrepresentations and omissions, consumers purchased the vehicles and it's the consumers who purchased the vehicles, who purchased them either at an inflated price, according to the plaintiffs, or lost value, according to the plaintiffs. The initial purchasers, and in this case all of the consumer plaintiffs, actually did bring suit. So they, Your Honor, are the more injured parties, and because you have these more injured parties, the recyclers lack proximate cause to bring the same claims.

If there's any doubt that they are the same claims, just look at the Complaint and, Your Honor, look at the Settlement Agreements that have been executed in this case. It's the same activity, leading to the same type of injury, according to the recyclers, for which they are seeking the same type of damage, either lost value or benefit of the bargain.

The last point, Your Honor, is, as the Supreme Court made clear, the reason we have this proximate cause requirement is to avoid a multiplicity of payments on the same claims. Your Honor, the Settlement Agreements make clear all of the vehicles that the recyclers seek recovery on are the same vehicles that the consumer plaintiffs pursued their recoveries on.

To the extent that the recyclers are seeking payment from the defendants, they are seeking payment from defendants again for the same vehicles, for the same conduct, and for the same types of damages.

Your Honor, we have looked and we have found not a single case where recyclers have sued auto manufacturers as a result of having recalled parts in vehicles that they had purchased as is. There's never been a case like that, and for good reason. The case doesn't make any sense.

The recyclers purchased their products, the vehicles, on spec, as is, to recover what they can recover; and if a part is subject to a recall subsequent to their purchase, that's just the cost of doing business. And they cannot turn around as

remote purchasers, nonusers of vehicles, and say to the auto manufacturers, you need to pay me now because I bought a car on spec, as is, to sell used parts and now I can't.

Proximate cause requirement directly addresses that and that's why the RICO claims pursued by the recyclers have to be dismissed.

Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you.

Who wants to respond to the recyclers?

MR. PRIETO: I will respond briefly. Your Honor, this whole issue of proximate cause is only being raised as to RICO because RICO has something that's very ordinary, which is a proximate cause requirement. This is very easy. They failed to disclose a defect for years and years. The recyclers bought these cars that they then would sell the parts, including the inflators and airbags, to others. When they bought these cars they didn't know that they had this defect. So these recyclers, these mom-and-pops, which are basically mom-and-pops all over the country, were never told that these cars had a defect in the inflators. They bought the car to then sell the inflator and they basically, literally and figuratively, got caught holding the bag because they couldn't sell it.

So where is the lack of proximate cause when somebody omits or conceals a defect, you buy a product as a result of that defect, and then you can't resell the product, which is

your business? So I don't know where this proximate cause argument is coming from.

If there's an issue about damages and what are their damages, that is totally separate. The damages suffered by the recyclers are separate from the damages suffered by the consumer. The recyclers had bought a car and now they can't resell that inflator in their car, like they're stuck with it, and they paid for a car that included that inflator. That's a damage issue; that's not a proximate cause issue.

THE COURT: But the party that committed the wrong is who?

MR. PRIETO: It's the same, the automaker.

THE COURT: Not Takata.

MR. PRIETO: Correct, because they failed to disclose --

THE COURT: Because there is no connection to Takata.

MR. PRIETO: Well, in terms of RICO. I mean, they are both -- they're part of the enterprise, but they're not defendants.

The other thing, too, is that the settlements that we reached with the consumers excluded the recyclers, had nothing to do with -- they were carved out. That's always been the intention because we decided to pursue the recyclers separately on a separate track. In fact, you told us split your Complaint, consumers and recyclers, so that we can go on two separate

tracks. So they were excluded.

I'm not sure what he means, that these are the same vehicles. You know, I guess -- it can't be the vehicles owned by the current consumers. I guess what he's saying is that if a consumer sells the car that eventually winds up in a recycler, that maybe that's the same vehicle, but that would be a small portion of what he's alluding to.

But the bottom line is, we've alleged easily proximate cause under RICO and that this is really not a proximate cause issue; it's a damage issue that should be left for another day.

THE COURT: How is that going to be resolved eventually?

MR. PRIETO: We've always thought that that's an easier case to resolve, Your Honor, in terms of -- you mean the resolution?

THE COURT: Yeah.

MR. PRIETO: We've not really had the opportunity, because we've been doing a lot of other things, to try to resolve that, but we --

THE COURT: If I granted a six-month stay, you could do it.

MR. PRIETO: But I think proximate cause -- I mean, it's a red herring. It's alleged and the issue really is one of damages and how you quantify it and that has nothing to do with proximate cause.

1 In the recycling there's also the argument THE COURT: 2 that's made again on the Plea Agreement. Does that have 3 anything to do with it? 4 MR. PRIETO: It's the same argument. 5 THE COURT: You know, there was a case -- and I don't 6 know if I asked you. That case, the General Motors case, 7 ignition, what impact does that case have? 8 MR. PRIETO: You know, I think a couple of things: 9 One --10 THE COURT: You don't like that case. 11 The GM ignition switch -- are you talking MR. PRIETO: 12 about the plea? 13 THE COURT: Yeah. 14 The charge? MR. PRIETO: 15 THE COURT: Yeah. 16 MR. PRIETO: Well, I mean, GM was charged with crimes, 17 not only crimes, but they're charged basically with what we have 18 alleged here in a different context, which is a wire fraud or a mail fraud. 19 20 What happened? THE COURT: 21 MR. PRIETO: What happened is that just like -- I guess 22 analogous, for years and year and years they hid an ignition 23 switch defect and that ignition switch defect -- what would 24 happen is, as you're driving on the highway the ignition switch 25 would go from the run position to the off position, and would

happen is that you could not brake and your airbags would not work. The deaths in that case were a lot more than the deaths in this case. I mean, there were hundreds of people, if I remember correctly, because I am involved in the MDL, but I wasn't involved in anything else. There were a lot of deaths as a result of that case, so there was a deferred prosecution agreement.

THE COURT: And what happened to the civil case?

MR. PRIETO: The civil case is still ongoing.

THE COURT: But wasn't there a denial? Wasn't there the granting -- didn't the district judge find that the damages were incompatible with RICO, speculative, et cetera?

MR. PRIETO: No. What happened in that case --

THE COURT: Or words like that, though.

MR. PRIETO: As to another issue. What happened in that case, there was originally RICO alleged in that case, but the enterprise consisted of GM and the law firm of King & Spalding, and the theory was that the law firm who handled the personal injury claims had conspired with GM to conceal the defect, and the Court said that's not normal because law firms get hired to defend defendants in exactly those kinds of claims. So the Court denied the RICO claim and dismissed it because one of the members of the enterprise, in fact I think the only member other than GM in the enterprise was King & Spalding, which is a law firm.

1 THE COURT: And that's what makes it different from this case? 2 3 MR. PRIETO: We have two members of the enterprise that 4 knew of the scheme and pushed it for years. 5 THE COURT: All right. Since we were at it, I thought 6 I would ask. I forgot to ask it before. 7 MR. FELLER: Your Honor --8 THE COURT: Anyone else who hasn't been heard who wishes to be heard? 9 10 The sun -- I've got some of that closed, so it's not 11 that late, but the sun kind of blinds you. That's why it's 12 great to have your witnesses come in right around five o'clock in the afternoon to make sure they see the light. It really 13 14 is very -- the jury sees that. So whenever we go to trial, 15 remember that. 16 Okay. Who do we have on behalf of whom and on what issue? 17 18 MR. WITTIE: Your Honor, my name is Vance Wittie on 19 behalf of the Nissan defendants, and my issue is something 20 completely different, as they used to say on Monty Python, it is 21 the Lanham Act. 22 THE COURT: The Lanham Act. 23 MR. WITTIE: This is something completely different 24 because it occurs only in the recycler claims and has not

previously been the subject of any order by this Court.

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THE COURT: So you've got an open-minded Judge, an open-minded Judge on this, right? What do you want me to do?

MR. WITTIE: Yours may be open, mine is merely empty.

The Lanham Act, Your Honor, is a Federal statute directed to unfair competition. It is not a consumer protection statute, and it provides no remedies for disappointed purchasers. There are several different ways that the Act can be violated. The only way that is alleged in this case is through alleged false advertising.

Now, it's important to note that the false advertising prong is just that, it requires the identification of particular statements that are false and misleading and does not create a duty to disclose information, nor does it make an omission actionable except where there are representations that are made that are rendered misleading as a result of that omission. So it's necessary in every false advertising case under the Lanham Act to look at specific advertising to determine whether it was false or misleading.

Basically, there are three fatal flaws with the recyclers' Lanham Act claims in this case. The first is the failure to identify specific actionable false advertising. All of the advertising that they refer to in the Complaint are excessively generalized or could constitute puffery.

THE COURT: Which count are we talking about?

MR. WITTIE: Which count?

1 THE COURT: Yeah. I don't know what count it is in the 2 MR. WITTIE: 3 Complaint, Your Honor. 4 THE COURT: Well, that kind of helps me. 5 MR. DRUBEL: Yes, Your Honor, it's Count 21. 6 THE COURT: 21. Okay. So that way we look at that, 7 and you're going to tell me what it is. 8 MR. WITTIE: And I don't intend to go through --9 THE COURT: Now, this doesn't just apply to your 10 client, right? 11 MR. WITTIE: Correct. 12 THE COURT: But you represent all of them? 13 MR. WITTIE: I am making argument on behalf of all of the automotive defendants as it relates to --14 15 THE COURT: Which is everybody? 16 MR. WITTIE: Which is everybody. 17 THE COURT: Okay. Not just Nissan. Go ahead. 18 MR. WITTIE: But it's necessary ultimately to identify 19 the alleged advertising by each of the defendants that is 20 identified in the Complaint. I'm not going to, obviously, go 21 through all of those. We believe that they are excessively 22 general, they're not actionable representations of fact that are 23 necessary to state a claim under the --24 THE COURT: What are the representations there in Count 25 21?

1 MR. WITTIE: Well, there are numerous ones. You know, 2 they go through each defendant. For example, for my client --3 Nissan, take that one. THE COURT: 4 MR. WITTIE: Nissan, there's a representation that 5 there is a brochure for some vehicle back in 2005, which says, 6 in essence, that these vehicles contain airbags, next generation 7 airbags, and that airbags are useful in helping safeguard you in 8 the event of a crash, and then there is a website statement from 2015, which is several years after the last of the vehicles 10 involved in this case were sold and the website statement is 11 simply a statement to the effect that Nissan has a commitment to 12 safety as a corporation and that's it. 13 THE COURT: And the statements regarding the others, 14 Subaru, Volkswagen, Honda, et cetera, are similar? 15 MR. WITTIE: Of a similar vein, yes, Your Honor, that's 16 correct. 17 THE COURT: General, we have got airbags, airbags are 18 safe; or they don't even go that far. 19 MR. WITTIE: We believe in safety here at Acme Motors, 20 it's literally that kind of level of generality in the 21 statements that have been identified. 22 Who's going to speak on the Lanham Act for THE COURT: 23 the plaintiffs? 24 I will, Your Honor. MR. DRUBEL: 25 THE COURT: Okay. Why don't you grab that microphone

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    so we can deal with that. Seems pretty -- I'm sorry.
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    your name and who you represent.
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             MR. DRUBEL: Richard Drubel representing the
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    plaintiffs, Your Honor.
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                         Okay.
                               Tell me. It seems pretty general,
             THE COURT:
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    don't you agree?
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             MR. DRUBEL: Yeah. Although it's general, but it's --
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             THE COURT:
                         So I should grant it.
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             MR. DRUBEL: No. Your Honor.
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             THE COURT:
                         Okay.
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                          I mean, the fact that -- what my colleague
             MR. DRUBEL:
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    overlooks is the fact that, I will say, while every defendant
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    makes the statement in its advertising and its brochures to
    consumers that it has airbags, what they omit to say, no
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    defendant has disclosed that those airbags could explode and
    kill the main occupants. So I think it's very --
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             THE COURT: Probably not a good selling point.
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             MR. DRUBEL: Not a very good selling point, Your Honor.
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    As Your Honor described it in 2016, it would be as if the
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    defendants put grenades in their airbags that may or may not
    explode on impact. But that omission is key because the Lanham
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    Act says if a defendant misrepresents the quality or
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    characteristics of its product, it may be liable for false
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    advertising and I think it --
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THE COURT: You don't think that's stretching the

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Lanham Act? 1 2 MR. DRUBEL: No, Your Honor. 3 THE COURT: No? 4 MR. DRUBEL: I think that omission is a huge, huge 5 misrepresentation. When somebody says, here, buy my car, it's 6 got airbags, doesn't tell you that those airbags, instead of 7 saving your life, may kill you or the occupants of your vehicle 8 or put out your eye --9 THE COURT: So they would have to say it's got airbags that are unsafe? 10 11 I don't think there's any way they could MR. DRUBEL: 12 honestly market their vehicles with airbags that will kill the 13 occupants. THE COURT: So if they didn't say anything about the 14 airbags, they would be okay. 15 16 MR. DRUBEL: If they didn't say anything about the 17 airbags, Your Honor, it would be a harder case for us, but each one of them --18 19 THE COURT: Each one has said something about airbags. 20 Absolutely. And if I could draw Your MR. DRUBEL: Honor's attention to paragraph 847 of the recyclers' Complaint, 21 22 we go through for each defendant and describe what they say, 23 some examples of what they've said. But the common denominator 24 is, the easiest point of decision on this is, they all say they

had airbags, they never say they could explode and kill you.

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1 That misrepresents the quality and characteristics of their 2 product. 3 THE COURT: You would agree that if they didn't say 4 airbags, the general statements about it's a safe car or we 5 believe in safety, that would not be enough? 6 MR. DRUBEL: That probably would not be. That, to me, 7 tends towards puffery. 8 THE COURT: Okay. So the issue is what is mentioned 9 about the airbags. Agreed? 10 MR. WITTIE: Yes, Your Honor. 11 THE COURT: You don't think that's enough. 12 MR. WITTIE: Just saying we have airbags is not a 13 statement --14 THE COURT: That they are good airbags or defective 15 airbags. 16 MR. WITTIE: It's not specific and testable enough for making a claim about the ability to perform any particular type 17 of accident to be actionable under the Lanham Act. This is not 18 19 a consumer protection statute where they can claim based upon a 20 pure omission. 21 THE COURT: And which case is where I hang my hat on? 22 MR. WITTIE: Lexmark, Your Honor, that's a U. S. 23 Supreme Court case from 2014. 24 THE COURT: And that's the one that helps in a Lanham 25 Act case?

1 A disappointed purchaser is not within the MR. WITTIE: Act's zone of interest. 2 3 THE COURT: And was there false advertisement there? 4 MR. WITTIE: Yes, Your Honor. 5 THE COURT: What was it? It was advertising about toner cartridges 6 MR. WITTIE: 7 and the ability or the inability of people in the secondary 8 market to also sell toner cartridges that this printer company was trying to sell. 10 So it wasn't anything that would have THE COURT: 11 anything to do with safety. 12 MR. WITTIE: No, it was not a safety issue in that case 13 at all. 14 But that doesn't make any difference, THE COURT: 15 though, does it, that this one involved safety? 16 No, it doesn't as far as what the MR. WITTIE: 17 requirement of the statute are. I mean, there's never been even before Lexmark --18 19 THE COURT: But it's kind of an unusual thing, right, 20 because you don't usually have Lanham Act cases with a defective 21 unsafe product, right, or do you? 22 MR. WITTIE: No, you don't. 23 THE COURT: Okay. Do we have a Lanham Act case with 24 defective unsafe products where the defendant of whatever 25 product it is did not disclose that it was an unsafe product,

and as a result, it was a violation of the Lanham Act?

MR. DRUBEL: I don't have any such case, Your Honor

THE COURT: So I'd be the first one.

MR. DRUBEL: I think you're the first, Your Honor, to have a defendant who advertises its vehicles as having airbags which in fact, instead of saving people, kill people, so --

THE COURT: Of course, you have to prove that they knew and that's related to the other issues.

MR. DRUBEL: Yeah. So although the Lanham Act doesn't explicitly have a knowledge requirement, there is -- I mean, the essence of a Lanham Act claim is that the defendant has misrepresented its product.

THE COURT: He has to know that it was false obviously.

MR. DRUBEL: So, I mean, I guess you could have a situation where the defendant closed its eyes, but that would be, I think -- probably that kind of recklessness would be the equivalent of knowledge.

I would point out, Your Honor, that while my colleague makes the point -- and I agree with him, it's not a consumer protection statute, but my clients, the recyclers, are not consumers, and you don't have to take my word for it because the defendants admitted it. They state it in their brief. They say in their reply brief at Page 1: "Recyclers are not consumers who purchased vehicles to drive." And we don't. So the fact that it's not a consumer protection statute is irrelevant.

To come within the zone of interest of false advertising under the Lanham Act, Your Honor, a plaintiff has to alleged an injury to a commercial interest in reputation or sales. What my clients, the recyclers, have alleged is an injury to sales. They are claiming lost sales because they cannot sell by law the airbags that have proved to be dangerous and fatally defective.

THE COURT: It's a clever argument. You want me to dismiss that clever argument, huh?

MR. WITTIE: It's too clever by half, Your Honor.

An interest in sales is not in itself sufficient to state a claim and put you under the interest of the Lanham Act if you are claiming as a disappointed purchaser. Whether they are an initial consumer or buying to resell, their ultimate claim is that we bought these airbags or we bought vehicles that contain airbags hoping that we could resell them, speculating that we could resell them, and we can't. That doesn't put you in the Lanham Act zone of interest alone. That's what the Locust Telecommunications case that we cite in our brief talks about. If you're just suing as a disappointed consumer and not as a result of some anti-competitive false advertising -- and that's where the distinction that they fail to make is -- the Lanham Act protects you from faulty competition.

The archetypical case in false advertising is I falsely disparage your product, say it's not a good product, you

shouldn't buy it; or I make a representation about my own competitive product which is false and it drives away customers for the plaintiffs. That's what a Lanham Act false advertising case is, but that's not what these -- that's not the situation that these purchasers are in.

They have this multi-step approach that they try to get their proximate causation by. In fact, that alone is reason enough to dismiss the case. They say that there was some initial false advertising which caused consumers, not themselves, to purchase these products, to purchase these vehicles, and that ultimately, over a long period of time, a secondary market in used airbag components developed which they then chose to speculate in by buying vehicles which contained these airbag components, but that ultimately, as a result of the fact that these vehicles were recalled and the airbags were no longer saleable, that they lost business. They're not suing us because we made a representation which drove away their business, which is what the Lanham Act zone of interest is. If anything --

THE COURT: And it's exclusively that? They're pushing the envelope and they can't?

MR. WITTIE: They can't. They can't do that without turning this into a general statute for disappointed purchasers.

THE COURT: All right. I don't know.

MR. WITTIE: What is unique about their particular

claim here, and I don't think that we've seen this in any other Lanham Act case that I'm aware of, is they're seeking to recover profits for lost sales occurring in a market that they say should never have existed. They say you should never -- if we had never engaged in the advertising, then a market would not have existed for these parts that they would have tried to fulfill.

So if you take away the Lanham Act violation, you have a situation where they have no investment in these vehicles, they have no attempts to make sales in these vehicles, and if that's the case, then the advertising actually promoted their sales, if anything, and what causes them damage is the recall and the inability for them to make further sales. It's not the false advertising, and that's where you have a cutoff in the causation. But even aside from the causation, you have the zone of interest problem.

THE COURT: All right. I'll give you the last word.

MR. DRUBEL: Your Honor, two points. One is, that argument kind of reminds me of somebody -- if I falsely claim that shares of stock are worth more than they really are and when the truth comes out, people lose money, and my defense is, hold on, it wasn't me who caused your loss, it was the truth, it wasn't me. I mean, you know, you were making money while you were trading in stock that I falsely inflated the value of. I mean, the answer here is not that their misrepresentations about

their product helped us. The fact is that when the truth inevitably came out and the market collapsed, we were, as Mr. Prieto said, literally left holding the bag and lost sales, which are imminently compensable under the Lanham Act.

The Lanham Act -- and I hear my colleague saying, well, you know, the paradigm case in the Lanham Act is where you divert customers, but that's not the only type of case under the Lanham Act.

In Lexmark itself, for example, the Supreme Court sustained a Lanham Act claim by a supplier of a defendant's competitor, not by a competitor itself, but by the supplier of the defendant's competitor.

In the Syngenta case that we cite in our brief, Your Honor, a District of Kansas case involving corn purchasers and the contamination of the corn market by a producer of genetically modified corn that caused the market to collapse for a period of time, the District Court in that case largely upheld Lanham Act claims.

The Lexmark case that my colleague cited to the Court, and we agree, is the governing case on Lanham Act claims, it's probably the most important case on private Lanham Act claims, says at U.S. 136:

"It is a mistake to infer that because the Lanham Act treats false advertising as a form of unfair competition, it can protect only false advertisers' direct competitors."

1 In other words, unfair competition does not require 2 that only competitors can bring cases. So in this case, there's 3 absolutely no reason why the recyclers can't bring a good Lanham Act claim, and we have done so. We've alleged that we're within 4 the zone of interest of the Lanham Act and that the injury 5 6 proximately caused our losses. Nothing more is required. 7 THE COURT: All right. 8 MR. DRUBEL: Thank you, Your Honor. 9 THE COURT: Thank you. Anyone else who signed up who wishes to be heard, who 10 11 has not already left the war of attrition here? 12 MR. FELLER: Your Honor, two points very, very briefly. 13 THE COURT: You know what you have to do. MR. FELLER: Lenny Feller for GM, second set of 14 15 attorneys. We're actually both from the same firm, so just the 16 second attorney. Your Honor, two very brief points because these are, in 17 18 my view, misrepresentations that just need to be corrected. 19 First, General Motors ignition switch litigation and 20 Mr. Prieto admitted --21 THE COURT: That's that Southern District of New York 22 case? 23 MR. FELLER: Southern District of New York, Judge Jesse 24 Furman, Your Honor, and I think the question you were trying to

get to -- first of all, I think you know there's a problem when

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1 Mr. Prieto starts talking about allegations in a different case 2 that have nothing to do with this case whatsoever. But I think 3 the point Your Honor was trying to --4 THE COURT: I was the one who asked the question. 5 MR. FELLER: Oh, no, no, before you asked it, he talked about it before that and started talking about how VW had 6 7 their diesel issue and General Motors so --8 THE COURT: Well, you know, that's kind of like to come 9 back. No problem. 10 MR. FELLER: Your Honor, look, the point I want to make is, there was a civil RICO claim in that case. That case was 11 12 dismissed or that claim was dismissed. 13 THE COURT: And whatever happened on appeal? MR. FELLER: Well, the case is still going on, so that 14 15 hasn't been appealed. 16 So we'll never know. THE COURT: MR. FELLER: Well, but we know at the District Court 17 level the RICO claim was dismissed. 18 19 THE COURT: But we don't know if he's right or not. 20 MR. FELLER: Well, we know that there's only one 21 opinion from a District Court judge that says he's wrong. 22 THE COURT: Okay. 23 MR. FELLER: Right? I can't tell you what the Second 24 Circuit would say, but I can tell you --25 THE COURT: Okav.

MR. FELLER: And the issue there was not King & Spalding or the law firm. The reason that the RICO claim was dismissed in that case was based on the damages claim, which is the exact same damages claim in this case which is -- plaintiffs have three damages theories, right? One is we paid too much or never would have bought it; two is we have diminished value; and three, we have out-of-pocket expenses. Right?

So the first two are what was addressed in the ignition switch litigation, and it's 2016 Westlaw 3920353 at star 18, quote, "rejected the contention that consumers could bring a RICO claim for harm to property based on the benefit of the bargain theory, defect theory pressed here."

What Judge Furman held in ignition switch is that you cannot, under RICO, claim damages -- if your damages claim is only that you paid too much or if it's only that your value is diminished, that is not a concrete injury for RICO purposes.

And so if the Court --

THE COURT: Of course, I kind of disagreed with that in a prior ruling.

MR. FELLER: You did. You did. Well, I don't know that you did. In your RICO --

THE COURT: I did it before that case.

MR. FELLER: One, you did it before that case and it's not entirely clear that you disagreed with it because you said, plaintiffs have three theories and I'm going to let it go

1 forward. So one way to read your prior order consistent with 2 Judge Furman --3 THE COURT: Okay. 4 MR. FELLER: -- is the third theory, what you allowed 5 to go forward was the third theory of out-of-pocket expenses. 6 Now, the problem here is that the third theory doesn't exist. 7 In the GM Complaint we have 32 plaintiffs, not a single one of 8 them alleges out-of-pocket expenses. Now, part of the reason for that is that 31 out of the 9 10 32 have GMT900 vehicles that Ms. Smith was talking about that 11 haven't been recalled, so you can't have out-of-pocket expenses. 12 And the 32nd, which I'll get to as my second point in a minute, is a different recall altogether, it has nothing to do with 13 ammonium nitrate, and alleges I had the recall repair performed 14 15 and that's it. Okay? THE COURT: That case I know is from 2016, the opinion, 16 but the case is older than that. 17 18 MR. FELLER: It was filed in 2014, Your Honor, and 19 unlike Mr. Prieto, I have been involved in that case and 20 Ms. Cabraser, who was here before, is involved in that case. 21 THE COURT: And what's happening to that case? 22 MR. FELLER: So, Your Honor, there's a personal injury 23 track, there's an economic loss track. There have been -- you 24 know, there were, I think, at some point on the order of 3,000

plus personal injury claims. Many have been resolved; many have

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been dismissed. --

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THE COURT: So we'll never know or we won't know for years what the Second Circuit thinks about that issue.

MR. FELLER: If the RICO claim is appealed to the Second Circuit, you're right. But, Your Honor, the weight of authority -- and among the opinions Judge Furman looks at is your opinion in this case, so there's a discussion of it. again, Courts can obviously disagree, but the weight of authority is that if you in a very generic sense -- and all 32 of these plaintiffs in our Complaint, it's copied and pasted, it's literally the same words copied and pasted 32 times; this person paid too much, the value of this person's vehicle is diminished -- that if that's all you have, if you don't have an economic analysis, if you don't have a description of why it's diminished, if you don't have a concrete explanation of the specific dollar amount, you've lost, that's not enough, again, for RICO. It may be enough for something else, but not for That's point one. RICO.

Point two, Your Honor: And, Your Honor, again, this is where we just get into territory where there are objective and verifiable facts in the public domain and it is not fair for plaintiffs to come to this Court and say something that is demonstrably false and say, well, you should believe it because it's in my Complaint for a Motion to Dismiss.

Mr. Prieto got up here and said that there was an

incident in 2013 or 2014, where a GM Takata airbag ruptured because of ammonium nitrate, because of this issue, and GM should have known. Your Honor, that is demonstrably and verifiably false. It is attached as Exhibit 1 to our reply brief. There was a lawsuit about that incident. A woman named Brandi Owens was injured, in fact lost an eye. There was also a recall. It's Recall Number 14V372 by NHTSA, by NHTSA. So, again, this has been disclosed, this has been litigated, this has been resolved.

There was a manufacturing issue, happened to be Takata airbags, where a part called an outer baffle and the wrong part was used, and as a result of that, over something like a two-month period there was a recall for those airbags. And again, that's something that's gone through NHTSA, that's gone through litigation in another case, and we know beyond doubt what the cause of that incident was.

So for Mr. Prieto to come in here and say, oh, well, GM should have known about it, that case had nothing to do with ammonium nitrate. And again, we've attached the Complaint and the recall and these are all public documents available to the Court.

Thank you.

THE COURT: All right. I think I have heard enough, don't you? Look at that. It's already 5:30. I know I made you wait until the afternoon. I'm sure there are so many things you

all want to say.

Remember, on a Motion to Dismiss I have to look at, what do they say, the four corners of the Complaint. Sometimes you can go a little bit beyond. And I let you argue some of the things because it's kind of a duel, and that's fine. You've waited long enough and I feel guilty that it takes so long and I'm not as efficient as I should be. But we can't keep on having the ping-pong because then we'll never be done.

MR. PRIETO: Your Honor, I don't like when they tell the Court that I have misrepresented or I have said a falsity to the Court. I just have two points on that because I take it as a personal, frankly, comment on me. Number one --

THE COURT: Oh, you know, nothing in court should be personal, it's always business. Okay?

MR. PRIETO: I've never accused them of misrepresenting anything and in the first two --

THE COURT: I know, but you threw a couple of things at some of the other defendants.

MR. PRIETO: That's fine, but I never accused counsel of misrepresenting. I just have two very minor points.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. PRIETO: Number one, the GM ignition switch case, he said I misrepresented --

THE COURT: Shouldn't have even asked that. I don't know why I did.

MR. PRIETO: What I said was that one of the issues that the Court said RICO did not exist was the enterprise and that was true. There were two findings in that, at least two. One: There was no enterprise because King & Spalding was not a knowing member of the enterprise. They were just basically helping GM defend these PI cases. So that was number one. So clearly, that was one of the findings, that there was no enterprise.

There was also a finding that Mr. Feller alluded to which said that the overpayment in that context, according to Second Circuit law, was not appropriate under RICO.

You alluded to that. In Managed Care you rejected that strict interpretation of RICO, citing the reader --

THE COURT: I know, but this case came way after that.

MR. PRIETO: Correct, and in this case you rejected it again, and you are not an outlier.

THE COURT: This case came after that.

MR. PRIETO: Correct, but other cases have gone against GM ignition switch. You are not an outlier. I'm just going to reference the pages, Pages 70 through 71. There are several cases that agree with your interpretation of the RICO injury because it basically says that when you lose money by overpaying, that's an injury to property which RICO prohibits and makes unlawful.

THE COURT: The only way to fix these things though --

the problem is, when a Motion to Dismiss is denied, it hardly ever gets appealed because these cases take so long, things settle, and we have great district judges who rule. Sometimes the best way to get good rulings is to grant the Motion to Dismiss and that way it goes up on appeal and then you have something good one way or another, because it could go either way. I agree with you all.

You've all made good arguments. I have learned a lot. Some of my colleagues disagree with oral arguments. I find oral arguments extremely interesting, and at the District Court it makes it easier because I don't have to give you only 15 minutes, though I say that and look what happens, we're here until sundown. But I'm going to let you go before it gets dark.

MR. MALLOW: Your Honor, before you do, I apologize, Michael Mallow. This is not related to the Motion to Dismiss.

THE COURT: It is related to what?

MR. MALLOW: It's related to a ruling Your Honor made earlier this morning about the Protective Order as it related to Daimler Chrysler and the Takata emails related to Daimler Chrysler. Your Honor indicated you were modifying the Protective Order to remove the confidentiality designation as to those emails. That caused a little bit of a stir.

THE COURT: I didn't hear anything.

MR. MALLOW: We have spoken to Mr. Prieto.

THE COURT: I didn't hear anything.

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It is our understanding, Your Honor, that MR. MALLOW: the modification of the Protective Order relates solely to the Daimler Chrysler -- the Takata documents marked confidential related to the Daimler Chrysler emails and not to any of the other auto manufacturers, the Takata documents related to any of the other auto manufacturers who are here, do have standing to be heard on the issue of modification. And Mr. Prieto does not disagree with that interpretation. THE COURT: I know, but I do, see, because this is going to come out anyway. MR. MALLOW: Well, not for the OEMs particularly who settled the case. So, Your Honor, for sure those documents should be left the way that they are. THE COURT: Well, unless they -- but see, are they going to come out at trial eventually? Considering the recycler claim should be MR. MALLOW: dismissed, I suspect not. No, we don't know, but right now --THE COURT: Eventually, it's going to come out. MR. MALLOW: Then I think Your Honor would have to give an opportunity to the auto manufacturers who are still in existence, who still are in the case, to argue why those designations need to be maintained. But for now --THE COURT: What would be the argument? See, I don't think -- why would something need to be sealed?

See, the only things that really need to be sealed --

if you have trade secrets to protect, you know, that makes sense. Right? But if it's something negative, which is the only way it would come out here, it's not a trade secret anymore. So the reason people like to have things sealed is because it's embarrassing to them in one way or another, either financially, morally. So I don't believe in that and I don't think the Court should and most judges agree.

You know, I sign -- and maybe I shouldn't. Maybe I won't sign any more Confidentiality Orders because we really shouldn't unless it's a trade secret. Someone brings us to court, not a defendant obviously, you bring us to court. Eventually, it's going to be before a jury, or even if it's in summary judgment, I've got to look at it. You know, you all file things -- in this case there were some, you know, it's blacked out. Right? Well, I'm looking at this, how in the world can I rule when most of the stuff is blacked out or whited out, whichever word you want to use, that gets blocked off and I don't even understand what it is? So you say we'll file another one sealed, so then I'm looking at something. So who else is looking at it?

MR. MALLOW: Well, there are two issues, Your Honor.

One is the Protective Order issue and that's the one we're discussing right now. And I understand Your Honor's position on documents that are filed with the Court under seal. We're not talking about documents filed with the Court under seal.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. MALLOW: What we're talking about is Your Honor's statement earlier this morning removing -- essentially modifying the Protective Order to remove confidential designations for documents that have not yet been submitted to the Court, but are contemplated to be submitted to the Court. That's a very narrow universe.

THE COURT: I meant to do that in relationship to what was being filed, attempted to be filed sealed in order to convince me to do one thing or the other. That's certainly the way I interpreted my own words, so I should be able to -- you know, I can be an originalist with my own words I think. That's what I meant. In other words, if someone says, I want you to consider this, but I want it sealed, it's going to be open.

Now, if it's something in the past in a settled case that doesn't come up, what's done is done. It's a fried egg already. You can't do anything except eat it. But if it's something new that comes up, so you know, my tendency is I'm not going to have things sealed, and if it's something that is going to be kept confidential because of a trade secret of some type that you're disclosing, then don't disclose it.

I mean, most of the arguments that are made -- I've had things under seal that have case law and Complaints. That's ridiculous, right? That's what I don't like. So you understand where I'm coming from. Maybe I painted it with too broad of a

1 brush. Certainly my concern is what's happening now. 2 raising a concern for your clients and also as a friend of 3 others, right --4 MR. MALLOW: Correct, Your Honor. 5 THE COURT: -- for people who have settled and paid up. Now what are you doing? You're opening it up. 6 But if there's a 7 RICO claim that involves them, too, then somehow it may come up. 8 MR. MALLOW: Again, Your Honor, there's a procedure in 9 place under the Protective Order, if the plaintiffs want to use 10 a document, we do have an opportunity --11 THE COURT: They have to let you know. 12 MR. MALLOW: Exactly. 13 THE COURT: I know. I know. MR. MALLOW: Our concern is that your order regarding 14 15 the emails today isn't read too broadly, and I think we're on 16 the same page now. 17 THE COURT: All right. How do you want me to write it? 18 What should it say? 19 MR. MALLOW: Essentially what I think -- the 20 interpretation that we had, which is, the emails that are the subject of the Takata confidentiality designation as it relates 21 22 to the Daimler Chrysler emails, those you've modified the 23 Protective Order. Everything else stays in place and the 24 procedure --25 THE COURT: The first part, I agree. The second part,

1 I don't know, but we'll leave it as it is until it comes up. 2 How is that? 3 Satisfactory, Your Honor. Thank you. MR. MALLOW: 4 THE COURT: Does that make sense to everybody who's 5 left here, which is still a lot of people. 6 MR. MALLOW: Yes. 7 THE COURT: Govern yourselves accordingly. Do people 8 still do that when they write letters? Okay. 9 MS. SMITH: Your Honor, Renee Smith for General Motors, 10 and I'm not arguing anything. I just needed to correct 11 something I misspoke on in the record that a very nice gentleman 12 from Ford pointed out because it was about Ford. 13 I erroneously said that NHTSA had denied Ford's Petitions for Consequentiality flat out. They had denied Ford's 14 15 request for a deferral and that's an important issue to Ford. 16 So I apologize for the error. I would worry about it 17 if I didn't correct it on the record, so I'm correcting it. 18 THE COURT: No problem. That's a fair thing to say 19 because there's a lot of coverage for this, and especially since 20 Ford kind of wants to leave. 21 That's it? Have a good afternoon. I'm not going to 22 tell you when I'm going to rule because I don't know when I'm 23 going to rule. Okay? But I'll try to rule as quickly as I can. 24 Thank you for being patient with me. 25 MR. PRIETO: Thank you, Your Honor.

1	MR. MALLOW: Thank you, Your Honor.				
2	MS. SMITH: Thank you, Your Honor.				
3	THE COURT SECURITY OFFICER: All rise.				
4	(The hearing concluded at 5:45 p.m.:)				
5					
6	CERTIFICATE				
7	I hereby certify that the foregoing is an accurate				
8	transcription of proceedings in the above-entitled matter.				
9					
10	01-18-19				
11	DATE GILDA PASTOR-HÉRNANDEZ, RPR, FPR Official United States Court Reporter				
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